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THE REST OF DON JUAN.

INSCRIBED TO

THE SHADE OF BYRON.

BY HENRY MORFORD.

"By my troth, I'll go with thee to the lane's end: if rough talk
offend thee, we'll have very little of it."

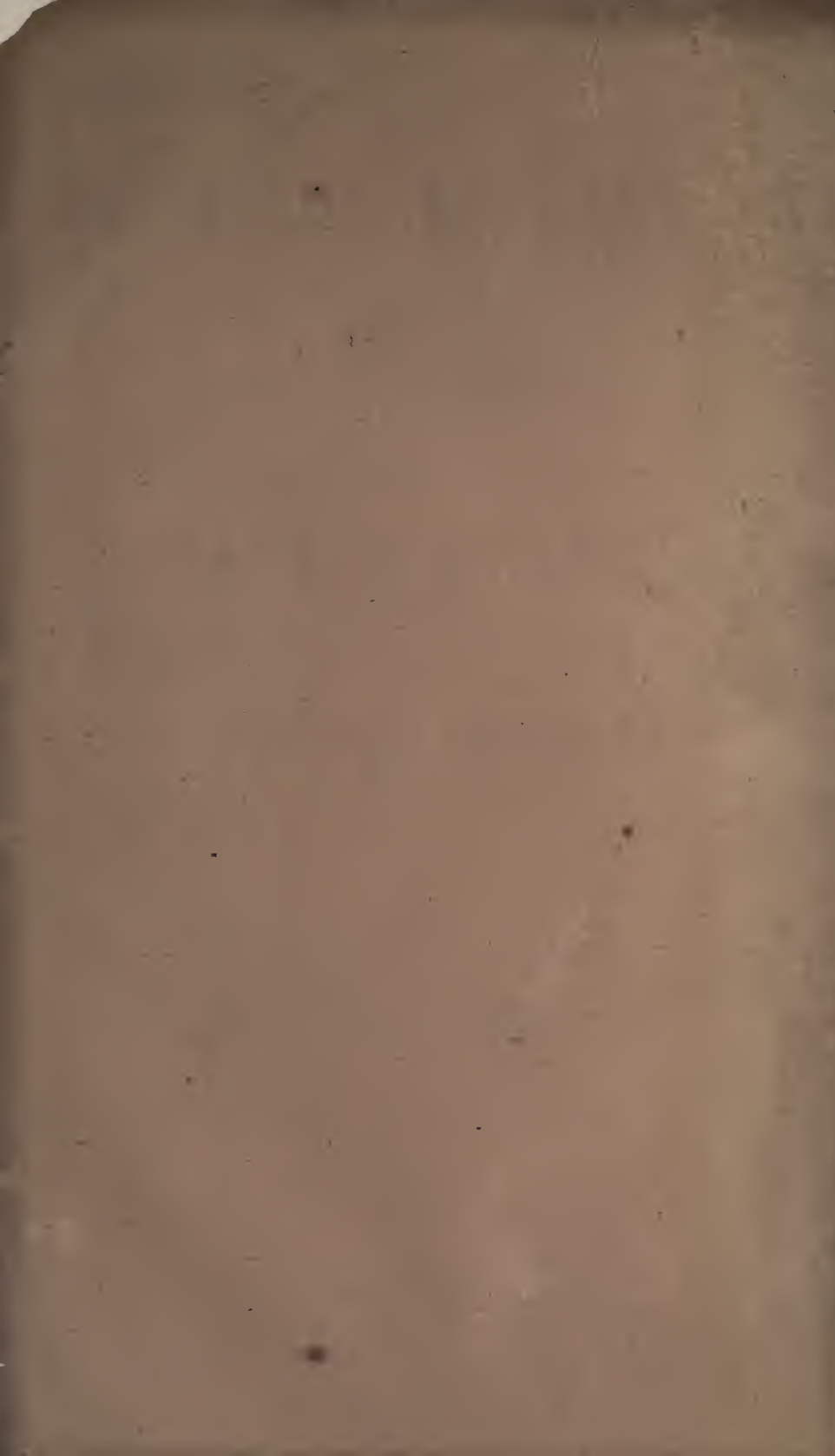
MEASURE FOR MEASURE

"The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to scourge us."

KING LEAR.

NEW YORK:
BURGESS, STRINGER, & CO.,
222 BROADWAY, CORNER OF ANN STREET.

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4/-

Chas Gail
April 24. 1880

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Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1846,
By HENRY MORFORD,
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of New Jersey.

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THE REST OF DON JUAN.

CANTO I.

I.

DON JUAN once again : 'tis hard beginning
 What may grow easy as the work is doing,
 And the assertion may be proved in sinning,
 Drinking, in smoking, wearing boots, and wooing,
 It may be quite as hard to start your meaning
 When such a mixture as the Don is brewing;
 I know no way to save the critic's rising,
 Except the hackneyed theme—apologizing!

II.

A new hand on the editorial page
 Runs close upon the old one's valedictory,
 A new form strides across the mimic stage,
 A new voice thrills you at Stoke Hampton recto-
 And a new general, stirring soldier's rage, [ry,
 Points out the usual share of blood and victory :
 They all apologize—a doubtful matter
 Whether they leave the world wiser or better.

III.

And yet apologies are indispensable
 To answer one end at the very least :
 If the new work is something reprehensible
 In point of valor, genius, wit, or haste—
 If the prime mover is but fully sensible
 Of all that may give slander's tongue a taste—
 The morsel may be spoiled by this forestalling,
 And the keen critic cheated of his calling.

IV.

Telling us something that we know already,
 Though often practised, only proves a bore,
 Unless our own praise keeps the plummet steady,
 And then how eagerly we gape for more !
 For never yet the soul but drank and fed, ay,
 Gorged to fresh fulness on the sweetened store,
 Forgetting truth in vanity, and shame
 In the fresh promise of a glorious name.

V.

That thirst for new things, that insatiate yearning
 For that which has not been, and only lives
 In the unquiet bosom's restless burning,
 Is but a throb the mighty engine gives,
 Which to the past all things of earth is turning,
 Digging a wide grave for the swarming hives
 Of all things human—hope, and life, and breath—
 And yet, they say, shall dig a grave for death.

VI.

That thirst for new things, which but yesterday
 Turned o'er the empires that the conquerors built,

Has meaner office than to tear away

The gilding from old sceptres ere they melt—
 An humbler task than bidding murderers pray,
 Rewarding virtue and pursuing guilt :
 It makes us scorn our great-grandfathers' capers,
 And read new novels and new morning papers !

VII.

Because I fault myself, I have a hope
 Ann street, and Wall, and Nassau, will be quiet,
 Or praise if they review : their praising scope
 May be the smaller that I do not buy it ;
 But kindly blame I thank, and those who grope
 For bitterness will find that I defy it :
 Not having a distinguished name to spoil,
 I shall care less if all the critics broil.

VIII.

Yet my own words can not anticipate
 All that kind friends shall honor me by finding,
 I shrink not from the ordeal of my fate,
 Not half too bright to profit well by grinding,
 And when well polished by the scoffer's sight,
 His scoffs shall pass as not well worth the mind-
 Or at the least as pointing landmarks given [ing ;
 To rescue the poor sleeper from oblivion.

IX.

Oblivion of the soul ! what abject grief,
 What sorrow o'er the soul must brood and black-
 Before we hug the horrible belief [en,
 That the immortal part shall ne'er awaken,
 That an existence happily so brief
 Is all that man with angels has partaken,
 Leaving but one abyss for all creation,
 The atheist darkness of annihilation !

X.

We would not be as nothing—would not be
 Forgotten in time's stir, and din, and bustle—
 Would not pass onward in mad ecstasy
 With the unthinking world that round us hustle—
 Would not die as the leaves that every day
 Beneath the hurried tread in autumn rustle—
 We would not be forgotten : such transition
 From light to shade is not our disposition.

XI.

It may be rough amusement setting fire
 To a small town some pleasant summer's day,
 But if the bosom burns with a desire
 For that which will not come another way,
 Namely—remembrance : light up dome and spire !
 Let red destruction round the ruins play !
 Curses and execrations be your lot—
 Better this infamy than be forgot !

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XII.

So reasons half the world ; the other half—

Good-hearted mortals—shed one tear apiece,
'Tis all they can afford, and then they laugh
At something laughable in his caprice :
Declare that, with a little finer stuff,

He might have been a dashing man with ease ;
And while the law hangs up the very bad man,
The world regrets the philosophic madman.

XIII.

Pages of jurisprudence and of crime !

How might they bear their damning proof of this !
How might they tell us, many, many a time,
Of this mistaken approbateness
That fosters foul thoughts in the growing slime
Where murder springs from an illicit kiss !
That looks on blood, however shed, as noble,
And pays the murderer richly for his trouble !

XIV.

Then we grow used to blood : so one by one
Spring up effects : the closing scene of all

Lets loose the sympathetic tide to run
Through bosoms formed of mingled pride and
The life that is so freely lost and won [gall ;
Whenever Justice lets her dagger fall,
Has little sacredness to be its guard,
While law, in punishing, secures reward.

XV.

No more, to prove that we love notoriety,
For every day proves that most faithfully
In every movement of our famed society—
In fashion, with her pretty foppery ;
In politics, religion, and sobriety ;
In mathematics and philosophy ; [bling,
The statesman's brawling and the lawyer's quib-
And last, not least, in my own kind of scribbling.

XVI.

I'm back again—just where we all return
In love and in importance, back to Ego ;
That's "I," they say in Latin, so I learn
What I learned not at school ; you know that we
Just far enough to learn at last to scorn [go
All save ourselves, like Sterne's old knight Diego :
'Tis an old story ; if you can not find it,
I've made the rhyme out, and you need not mind it.

XVII.

Don Juan once again : and by my hand !
There is a world of sadness in the thought—
That he at whose half-idolized command
The frostwork fancies of the name were wrought,
Has gone the ashes of his fires to blend
With the cold dust that shall caress him not,
But lie upon his breast with the same force
That makes the prison of the miser's corse !

XVIII.

This makes the sadness of a retrospect
In all life's changes—what has passed since then ?
It is a saddening grief to recollect
That when the gliding and creative pen
The mimic page with his last stanza decked,
Leaving his task so much unfinished—then,
Then BYRON lived, and now he lives no more,
And other temples wear the wreath he wore !

XIX.

Ah ! not his wreath of fame, for he has borne
That to his rest : ah ! not his wreath of power,
For the decaying hand that, spent and worn,
Could trace so well the faded leaf and flower,

Moulders in night that knows no waking morn,
And lies as nerveless as at dying hour ;
And yet, believe me, he has left a wreath
Whose legacy is beautiful in death :

XX.

The wreath of toil, the midnight vigil kept
By eyes that well might claim an hour's repose,
The face that tells how sadly they have wept,
The form that lies not down at evening's close,
The languor oft that o'er the spirit crept,
And lingers yet, with fevered starts and throes—
These are the legacy he held the while,
All faded flowers in the wreath of toil.

XXI.

And they were his : he had the corsair's soul
Of haughty sternness, fit for wilder times ;
Passions like his, that never brooked control ;
Passions, well told in his heroic rhymes ;
With many a virtue beckoning to the goal,
And less, by far less, than his thousand crimes :
His dust is mingled with the dust he trod—
His memory is with us, and with God !

XXII.

So circumstances form the outward man,
And bend the inner even to their will ;
That one short hour prepared the course he ran
For a momentous weight of good or ill—
Good, if applied as few of mortals can,
But far too apt the struggling heart to fill
With dark repinings, and with vain regrets
That know no solace but destructive fate's.

XXIII.

One throe at birth, one moment of grimace,
Unkind and false in her who bore him, made
A death-blow to his step of natural grace,
Deformed him in the steps he came to tread
In his ancestral halls ; and in the place
Of fond maternal kindness, on his head
Vented unkindly scorn, ay, scoff and jeer
For the misfortune that had claimed a tear.

XXIV.

And it is hard to be as others are not,
To own deformity, however slight,
To feel a yearning for something we dare not—
Lest others scoff at some unwonted sight—
To fear slight insults that the happy fear not,
To shrink at every look, glancing or light—
Hard for the common herd—but oh, for those
Whose very being in affection grows !

XXV.

I would not scoff the world as some men scoff ;
There are true hearts and kindly feelings in it ;
There are affections true and kind enough
To calm to pleasure every troubled minute
For some, and not for others ; pain glides off
From gay, light bosoms, while the deeper win it,
And riot, as a luxury, in grief,
Praying for what they scorn—rest and relief.

XXVI.

For grief has luxury, and stern reserve
May even own the pride of generous kindness ;
Seldom without a palling stroke we swerve
To wilful, cold misanthropy and blindness,
And yet the merest badinage may serve [ness :
To make men querulous in their dreams of grand-
Vide, those I could point you out—and would,
If personating might do any good.

XXVII.

I'm something so myself, when I remove
The covering of romance from my feelings,
I find that vanity and pure self-love
Are something very like divine revealings,
As tightly grasping and as hard to move
As well-fed clerk amid his office stealings,
Who filched the spoils last year with the majority,
And cringes for a hope in the minority.

XXVIII.

But Byron died in Greece, and such a death
Was meet for such a life as Byron lived,
It had been mockery, when he gave his breath—
Had his tormenters by his death-couch grieved.
England, the isle that held his blasted wraith,
Was no place for deceiving and deceived—
No place where he might sink to rest, whose brow
Was witness of the words, "I must sleep now."

XXIX.

'Tis sweet to die at home, sweet to lie down
Amid our household scenes to sleep for ever,
With murmuring voices breathing of our own
O'er the bright pebbles of a native river;
Death-bed for Scott, with Tweed's low rippling
streams

Soothing his sleep, "after life's fitful fever,"
For Tweed had shared in the last minstrel's themes,
And Scott loved all Scotia's romantic streams.

XXX.

And Scotia loved him, for his kindly heart
And the rich legacy of love he gave her—
In the bright legends that shall ne'er depart,
While men shall hold the beautiful in favor—
That ne'er shall cease to bind the brows of art
So long as Truth may worship or may save her,
For Scotia knew the legends Scott rehearses—
Draw travellers' pilgrimage and travellers' purses.

XXXI.

They told that he was dead—it was a blow
To every man who owned him Scotland's child,
From plaided herdsman on the border knowe
To the dark huntsman in Blair Athol's wild;
The ploughman ceased to whistle at his plough,
The cotter smiled in sadness when he smiled,
Men knew that they had lost a kindly friend,
Men turned in sadness o'er his grave to bend.

XXXII.

There was a funeral train from Abbotsford,
Borne slowly with dark hearse and waving plume,
There was his future and his martial lord
Bent to his saddle bow with filial gloom,
There was a wail, anon and dying, heard
As if that land were one vast curtained room,
And the dead sleeper had been friend and brother
Whose likeness should not spring up in another.

XXXIII.

Draw, draw the curtain; as he died few die,
So much at ease with conscience and the world,
Giving to death a kindly beaming eye,
A lip that with disdain scarce ever curled,
A hand that to the power throned on high
One token of defiance never hurled;
This for a man of strong imagination
Speaks more than twenty pages of oration.

XXXIV.

Such death was not for Byron, he, alas!
It was not all his fault, had weaned away
So much of love as pleased him to possess,
From the cold bosoms where perchance it lay;

And there was little left him but to pass
To rest amid men of congenial clay;
They stood around him, men in form and face
Ideal heroes of heroic Greece.

XXXV.

Appearances, they say, are oft deceitful;
It needs not twenty years to prove it true,
There's little doubt Greece's old throes were fateful,
Leaving her men, how changed, from what they
grew,
When aught but battle-strife was dull and hateful
To stern Athenian and bold Spartan crew;
(That "crew" 's a word the critics may object to,
And yet 'tis fine to tack a lawless sect to.)

XXXVI.

The Grecians of to-day would hardly stand
To be made mince-meat of at narrow gorges,
They've found that fighting singly, hand to hand,
Against stout war-ships with old leaky barges,
Or bearing up, with fifty in a band,
Against ten thousand horsemen's furious char-
Is very pleasant to the few that's left, [ges—
But to the rest a rather costly gift.

XXXVII.

They're not so rashly brave as they have been,
Some men would call them cowards and poltroons,
Because the rule of the Bavarian,
With fifty swords and twenty rusty guns,
Is held sufficient for a Grecian reign,
And owned dominion by the Spartan's sons;
Perhaps they've learned a lesson hard forgetting
That setting up is harder than upsetting.

XXXVIII.

But Arnaut, Suliote, and Albanian,
Bore yet in Byron's time the glorious figure
They bore in olden time, the classic mien,
That told of deathless fire and deathless vigor,
The men for sword, and spear-haft, and carbine:
E'en now, examined without too much rigor,
The tourists say (I am not one of them)
They look like scions from a noble stem.

XXXIX.

Night, night on Missolonghi—Greece's friend,
The idol of her people, was departing,
And the dark Suliotes, his own life-band,
Gathered around his chamber-doors, half starting,
In fear of the chill tidings that should send
Away the friends that life knew no deserting,
The tidings that the pulse so faint and low
Had ceased for ever its accustomed flow.

XL.

And there were dusky forms bowed, as in prayer,
Where the red torch-light flickered to and fro
Of men who knew what supplications were
Only in hours of anguish or of woe.
The cross waved wildly in the passing air
The beads told so distinctly, faint, and low,
In prayers for one in the death-shadow lying,
And for that Greece whose firmest friend was dying.

XLI.

But Byron died in Greece, and time that bore
His coffined ashes to his native land,
Stirred up the spirit of old Greece once more
With men of firmer heart and stronger hand;
A new shout rung the Grecian ruins o'er,
A new foot trode on Missolonghi's sand,
And of the modern names in Greece's story,
Bozzaris shares the highest meed of glory.

XLII.

Some chance caprice a rhymèr may fall into
 Makes out a general order of replevin,
 Arraigns some gentlemen it were a sin to,
 To answer for the trouble they have given,
 And though, to tell the truth, he does not mean to,
 He saves his hero from the rest's oblivion ;
 So Halleck's muse will keep Bozzaris' fame,
 When of his comrades none record a name.

XLIII.

Bozzaris died as man would wish to die,
 And Halleck sung him, as man seldom sings ;
 Sung him as Byron, when his pulse was high,
 And his free spirit had its noblest wings—
 Would have been proud to sing, with battle cry,
 Banner, and trumpet, and all glorious things
 That make the glitter and the show of war,
 Hiding beneath, the rapine and the scar.

XLIV.

There is a sound upon the Grecian shores
 All day, of gratitude to Byron's name,
 And when the silver light of evening pours
 Upon the marks of Greece's pride and shame,
 A calm sweet watch seems bending o'er the hours,
 Holding a torch from the eternal flame, [bered,
 White-robed and pale, where the old heroes slum-
 Singing a song that prays to be remembered.

1.

The stranger's step is hushed and still,
 The stranger's hall is cold and lone,
 And shadows, by the northern hill,
 Are laid upon his burial stone ;
 The stranger's memory is left,
 To mind us of the parted gift.

2.

The stranger's heart, the stranger's tongue,
 Were words of kindness in our need,
 His gold upon our altars rung,
 Not valor's bribe, but valor's meed,
 The stranger stood as freemen stood ;
 The stranger's veins ran noble blood.

3.

They bore his dust to other climes,
 They laid him with a colder race,
 Where sadly to the distant times
 A friend his memory shall trace ;
 They might have left him sleeping here,
 Where every dew-drop is a tear.

4.

The stranger's step is hushed and still,
 The stranger's hall is cold and lone,
 And shadows, by the northern hill,
 Are laid upon his burial stone :
 Our spirits by his side shall stand,
 And plead his doom in spirit-land.

XLV.

Newstead has many memories of old,
 Memories of mitred bishop, monk, and cowl,
 Of times when priests were pious, archers bold,
 And forest men loved the brown cup to trowl,
 When holy mother church her favors sold, [jowl],
 And abbots, knights, and kings, went cheek by
 Numbers no doubt her charms against fatalities,
 In certain blind believing spiritualities.

XLVI.

Religion is not now the thing it was,
 And will not be again, to all appearance,
 There is less honor for the churchmen class,
 And less emolument for their adherents.

There was a time when empires, kingdoms, laws,
 Were ruled right blindly by their interference,
 The fault's grown now, she rules us far too little,
 We scarce remember we've accounts to settle.

XLVII.

Religion is a shield, and I for one
 Would have it sacred, never pierced or shattered,
 It saves some gentlemen from being "done,"
 And some dull wooden-heads from being battered
 But, little mindful of the scoffings won
 From reputations brilliant, false, and tattered,
 Wild, wayward, and unstable, I acknowledge—
 That inspiration learns us more than college.

XLVIII.

I turn not from the faith of old St. Peter
 With all the protestant indignation,
 In fact, I've grown tired of the speaker's metre,
 In one long anti-catholic oration,
 I deem there may be good and odious features
 In every institute of man's creation,
 Although I never light on Fox's Martyrs,
 But I'm disposed to burn the papal quarters.

XLIX.

England's old abbeys are to me old links
 Binding us backward to the past ideal,
 Calm, still, assistants to the soul that shrinks
 From an unceasing conflict with the real,
 Although the closing up of window-chinks,
 Forbidding fair young girls to hear and see all
 That passes in the outer world, enforces
 A rather harsh believing in their courses.

L.

And yet there is a still solemnity
 In every movement of the vestal nuns
 That proves the soul of old sincerity,
 Through the whole monastic ritual runs,
 Shut from the world, it was not hard to be
 More holy than amid earth's passionate sons ;
 Could the nun's purity blend with the wife,
 There might be less of broken vows in life.

LI.

Such are the thoughts the stranger would have given
 In Newstead's halls a hundred years ago,
 But mark ! the recollections, time has striven
 Round Newstead's halls and Newstead's towers
 to throw,
 Glide backward, when a nearer flash from heaven
 Lights up the dim aisles with a deeper glow ;
 The fame of genius has a power beyond
 The olden tales of witchcraft and of wand.

LII.

Who stands in Newstead with a thought of old ?
 Who looks for friars save her merry monks ?
 Whose eye in fancy has a chief beheld,
 Save the mock abbot in his gladsome pranks ?
 Not one : the household places that he filled,
 His seat of habit on accustomed banks,
 The things he shared at sport and festival,
 These are the traveller's meed, and these are all.

LIII.

They look upon the bleached and whitened skull
 That, days uncounted, held his revel-wine,
 "Whose flow, unlike all others, ne'er was dull,"
 And trace, reflectively, in cup and line,
 The merry madness which ran fast and full,
 Whether he bowed to votary or shrine,
 A yearning far too bitter in its pride
 To be apart from all the world beside.

LIV.

This natural tendency for climbing ladders—
 Though rather favorable to notoriety—
 Requires, without you like to nest with adders,
 A deal of notice over your sobriety :
 For reptiles all, from men to double-headers,
 Will give no chance to one too proud to buy it; he
 Who misses footstep in this awkward climbing,
 Had better ne'er begun, in war or rhyming.

LV.

A fall (sub rosa) is sometimes beneficial
 In giving one a proper estimate
 Of what a blackguard set, miscalled judicial,
 Give laws to those who call themselves the great,
 For our good friends are always sure to fish all
 Our little foibles from their quiet state,
 So that if harm is really anywhere,
 The world will be right sure to know its share.

LVI.

That's proper—if some men were left alone,
 They'd go through life without enough of trouble;
 'Tis very well a friend or two to own,
 Who find the soap and then blow up the bubble;
 And if the size should not suit every one,
 Pile on conclusions, and report it double;
 There's the prime cause of all our best inventions,
 Remembering pavements made of good intentions.

LVII.

Once more at Newstead : I have wandered here,
 To pay the personal tribute I have penned,
 Beside the sculptured covering of that bier,
 Where, Byron says, he laid his only friend;
 His mute companion might have claimed a tear,
 But 'twas unkindly mockery to blend
 All living men together, and declare
 That falsehood reigned and triumphed everywhere !

LVIII.

I have been bruised and broken, trampled on
 By those who should have been my heart-rela-
 The impotence of friendship I have known [tions,
 When it is called to war against the passions;
 Yet for the love I bear my human kin,
 I would not breathe of such humiliations,
 I would not say that all are false and heartless
 Because one half the race are proved desertless.

LIX.

But he sleeps not amid the dim old vaults
 And mouldering coffins of his ancient line;
 The pilgrim to his last reposing halts
 Beneath an humbler roof, at humbler shrine;
 No fulsome blazon serves to hide his faults,
 Nor new-found virtues to his name consign :
 He keeps a rest befitting his last prayer,
 Far, far from pomp, and its attendant care.

LX.

There is a quiet grave in Hucknall church,
 Where the worn traveller may stand above
 The dust that left him at the eternal porch—
 The dust that lingers of his earthly love,
 That glides not backward from the pilgrim's search,
 Nor starts to view where idle footsteps rove
 The very stone above his memory laid—
 The tribute a true-hearted sister paid.

LXI.

Sweet, sweet Augusta ! was it not unjust
 To bow despairing while Augusta lived ?
 Was it so hard to crumble into dust
 While such a being by his death-couch grieved ?

The husband and the father dared not trust,
 And evil bodings are not oft deceived :
 The beings who had shared his priceless fame,
 Refused a tombstone to the poet's name !

LXII.

There were two grand mistakes that Byron made :
 Some hours when he was rather conscience-smit-
 Some good verse wasted when he drove his trade [ten,
 At making rhymes for women, serpent-bitten :
 I mean when "Fare thee well" his heart betrayed,
 And "Ada of my house and heart" were written;
 Neither the mother nor the daughter paid him
 For these small slips of overwork they made him.

LXIII.

Affection finds mistakes—'tis nothing strange—
 The heart that in itself is full and flowing
 Has no conceit of coldness in its range,
 And, while its own affections still are growing,
 Argues no possibility of change,
 And no refusal of the heart's bestowing;
 That which is all love's life, and light, and fulness,
 Has no conception of cold-hearted dullness.

LXIV.

Perchance the richest hearts are always blind,
 For human wisdom mates not with first love;
 I care not for the works of human kind;
 The serpent scarce companions with the dove;
 Perchance the reason we may live to find
 In the first problem that our actions prove;
 The eye that gazes on things bright and holy,
 O'erlooks and scorns the commonplace and lowly !

LXV.

So we talk poetry to younger misses,
 Spend months to prove that love is so delightful,
 Dwell on soft pressures and ecstatic kisses,
 Fancy we have a hold both firm and rightful,
 While some pert jackanapes more aptly presses
 His suit, with empty head and pocket tightful :
 'Tis ten to one that well-filled fobs and purses,
 Before we know it, beat our lays and verses !

LXVI.

Repentance may come afterward—perhaps
 The victim yet may find what love is worth,
 Too late to call back Time from his elapse,
 Too late to win the siren back to earth :
 Pardon the exultation that escapes
 The closed lips of the sufferer in his dearth—
 It is a pleasure he can not repress,
 To find a sharer in his wretchedness !

LXVII.

In the one error that wrung Byron's soul
 So near to madness—love for Mary Anne—
 Could he have traced the future, to unroll
 The one first torture maddened into many—
 Could he have seen her in her husband's hall,
 Flung by to make room for his foxhounds—then
 Might have found pleasure in the recollection [he
 Of his and the fox-hunting squire's affection.

LXVIII.

Wife, daughter, love, are with forgotten things
 To him who dwells within the grave's obscurity;
 This consciousness, that to the worn heart-strings
 The narrow house awhile shall give security—
 'Tis fearful straining of the spirit-veins
 To look into the fathomless futurity;
 And if I do it, it must be in reference
 To this our poem, and a moral difference.

LXIX.

'Tis sure destruction, reverently spoken,
 To differ from the path that genius walks;
 The moral obligations he has broken
 Must be so fractured—or the follower balks;
 The very oaths must follow (mine by token)
 'That the said genius uses when he talks—
 Never forgetting to turn down the collars,
 And scoff at holy things and holy scholars.

LXX.

Any obscurity in thought or language,
 Any affecting of most brutal English,
 Any such war as the Carlylist gang wage—
 * * * * *

And if the follower don't beat the leader,
 'T'wont be for want of humbugging the reader!

LXXI.

We're all humbugged a little, by-the-way,
 In certain honors paid to certain lions;
 Although, in truth, I've little there to say:
 For if the truth must be told, I did try once
 To help strew flowers in Charles Dickens' way—
 He who I hoped would pass our follies by once,
 And not scoff at our horrid pertinacity,
 As some had done, with suitable mendacity.

LXXII.

Some spirits nondescript, how mixed and mottled!
 Must have presided at young Boz's natal,
 And in his exquisite exterior bottled
 The ludicrous, the gay, the sad, the fatal,
 Mixed up of virtue freed and murderers throttled,
 Giving assurance of the clear bright metal
 That feels above the tinsel poet's course,
 And writes his glorious thoughts, without his verse.

LXXIII.

And yet the wisest men have some weak spots,
 And inconsistencies are theirs as well;
 I know that Sense and Folly once drew lots
 Which should in Boz's book the story tell:
 Americans grew black as Hottentots,
 Esquimaux manners under notice fell,
 And that which should have been there, mind on
 Was quite forgotten, or all left behind. [mind,

LXXIV.

All this to prove there's no necessity
 To take an author's follies for his beauties,
 That wit may be at home, and pleasure free,
 Without a single blow at moral duties;
 An illustration is the way to me
 To show how sad and sorrowfully true 'tis—
 The noblest genius stoops to desecrate
 The noblest calling of man's high estate.

LXXV.

'Tis desecration on the page to lay
 What woman's virtue must turn pale to read;
 And for the poet's calling, none may say
 He who is one, in power, truth, and deed,
 Bows down to any form of moulded clay
 In nobly battling for the glorious meed
 Of manhood's benefactor, woman's friend—
 An ordeal where our wishes all should end.

LXXVI.

That Byron sought the injury of man,
 Or womankind, in any line he penned—
 Further than where his first resentments ran
 Against a bitter foe, or faithless friend—

Is arrant falsehood; though the critic clan
 Have dared their volley on his head to bend,
 I dare stand up and say, it was not his
 To make life, willingly, worse than it is!

LXXVII.

The spirit that was full of human love
 Imparted freshness to the glowing scene,
 Bade the voluptuary more softly move,
 Placed for illicit love a finer screen,
 Brought feelings that have never dwelt above,
 And called them innocent and half divine:
 It was the spirit of his own indulgence,
 And not a meteor-blaze, a false effulgence.

LXXVIII.

The mind that seeks passing amusement only
 In the young Don, will not grow better by him;
 The bitter moralist has glossed too finely
 The soft temptations and the snares that try him;
 But even now, unfinished, young, and lonely,
 Let but the calmness of reflection eye him:
 The time so spent will hardly be repented,
 And e'en the moralist will be contented.

LXXIX.

Youth with Don Juan has not passed as yet:
 His veins beat high with youth's ecstatic musing;
 When has the libertine a pleasure met
 That did not perish sadly in the using?
 Upon what page is not the moral set
 That youth and love were not made for abusing?
 The scoffing vein covers but can not hide
 The hollowness of his voluptuous pride.

LXXX.

How much the balance hangs, for good or evil,
 Of Juan's readers, is a nice position;
 But all agree, that, leaving Byron's revel,
 Few men have equalled him in composition;
 At either side, I'm not disposed to cavil,
 But left in rather fatherless condition—
 With his loose moral thoughts little diminished—
 Pardon, if I attend him, till he's finished.

LXXXI.

I've put him off so long, I'm half afraid
 The reader will despair of his arrival;
 But if morality is well repaid,
 This short procrastination is a trifle;
 Although the dust of twenty years is laid
 Upon him, I despair not of revival:
 When I fix this prospectus as I want to,
 I'll take the Don up in another canto.

LXXXII.

There's nothing very new in the remark
 That death comes on at unexpected times—
 That he shuts up the everlasting ark
 Just as the seeker to the window climbs—
 Cuts off the venial murderer in the dark,
 Without an expiation for his crimes,
 And drops the rhymers, with exhausted breath,
 Almost in grasping distance of his wreath.

LXXXIII.

But the remembrance of the brittle thread,
 Our only guarantee for one hour's life,
 Is small excuse for stiffening the tread,
 Or stirring men to enmity or strife;
 So much we owe, even when with the dead,
 To those who tread behind us, and so rife
 With all importance, that our deeds may claim
 A true defender for their worth and fame.

LXXXIV.

Or e'en a finisher. How many a scheme
Of human wisdom totters into dust,
When the first mover's eye grows pale and dim,
And age, or death, lay the mind down to rust,
When the great army, moving in the game,
Behold no more the hand they learned to trust,
As many a one in warlike operations,
And Davenport in mulberry speculations.

LXXXV.

Only five stanzas more—I'd rather thought
To make this ninety stanzas fill a canto:
Whether I'll be obliged to spin it out,
Or find the space I've given rather scant too—
I hardly know yet; but one thing is flat—
No longer and no shorter than I plan to;
So all the stars poetical protect us!
I must be driving on with my prospectus.

LXXXVI.

The wreath fell not from Byron's dying grasp,
His name was written down with time's immortals,
His hand need only stretch itself to grasp
The scroll that gave him place in fame's white
And envy's scorpion, or detraction's asp, [portals,
Could only wound him as the serpent hurtles,
Fatal, because beneath, and only spared
From the base crawling of the race it shared!

LXXXVII.

But thus far know I—that I would not fall
Just in the middle of a high career,
Leaving the niche half built in memory's wall,
Half undiscovered, when the rest was clear.
I would not die, without a friend to call
All I had scattered, thoughtless, there and here,
To bind my broken arrows in my quiver,
And hold them as memorials of the giver.

LXXXVIII.

All that I know of Byron, I have drawn
From those best indices, to read the soul,
Familiar letters, with no veil put on
Of worldly seeming, politic control:
Thrown out, a fountain's sparkle, like it, gone,
In the allusions that make bright the whole—
But leaving yet some varying shades and tints
That serve his self-executor for hints.

LXXXIX.

One promise, one apology, and then
I'll rest—my morals are beyond a doubt,
If I find anything that's quite too plain,
Like a good moralist, I'll leave it out;
I'll keep the Don in as correct a vein
As may be done, without a rein too taut;
And at the end, if I don't have things straight,
Poetic justice won't make out a fate.

XC.

The one apology—I can not bring
The eastern gardens, and the eastern hourii,
I can not sing, as Byron used to sing,
Old Greece's beauty, Greece's faded glory;
Can not paint Europe's fashionable ring,
As if it came from a bystander's story;
The rest depends more on the gazer's eyes
Than e'en the pen that sparkles as it flies.

CANTO II.

I.

"THE deuce is in the moon for mischief!" so
Says Byron in young Juan's first love-scape;
Meaning to have it understood, you know,
That love by moonlight's generally cheap,
And that she makes the softer feelings grow
Into a more voluptuary shape;
A fair insinuation that it is chief
Of the moon's business to make earthly mischief.

II.

That's false! How do they say it? false and traitor—
And all that sort of thing—in tragedies, [ous!
And other works that foreign writers cater us,
Who study less to learn us than to please—
And don't stop in their moral rhymes to spatter us,
As we stop in such crazy rhymes as these,
Where the first motto is, 'splash all your neighbors,'
And this soon gets to be like all love's labors—

III.

Confounded easy.—'Tis not very hard [with,
To find fault with the world, or be found fault
Our fun's the salt (see butter, cheese, and lard),
The world's the kind of thing they take the salt
Or to make finish of this quibbling-card, [with,
The malt, and liquor that they take the malt with,
They—I have given up the drinking revel,
Followed Tom Marshall, and eschewed the devil.

IV.

But this a little secret—'twould not do
To rear this banner of the stanch teetotals,
Just when I might describe, and freely too,
Lord Henry's guests, among their champagne-
bottles,
I might, perhaps I will—the red wine flew,
So did the waiters, and so did the stopples,
The last don't follow the consecutive,
But sentiments, not rhymes are what we give.

V.

Rhymes are not always handy; you can't find them
Just when you happen to desire them most,
And in that case, 'tis better not to mind them,
For generally the small price they cost—
Is that when rhymes are nicely strung behind them,
The meaning, no great consequence, is lost,
That makes this measure something of a favorite,
A sort of fame from which the Lord deliver it.

VI.

Twopenny scribblers, what a world of loss
(Negative loss, not losing what you never had)
You would have suffered, playing pitch and toss
At that small stock of common sense you ever had,
Making your brains the mark, the space across
The reputation you, as very clever, had
(Not a large mark, and rather a small distance,
You might have hit by some uncommon mischance),

VII.

If Pulci, Whistlecraft, and Noel Byron,
Had not made up a kind of rhyming jangle
Serving the pens, too soft for steel or iron,
Pewter, I mean, the English tongue to mangle,
Serving to heap cat smiles, or brimstone fire on,
When ribald rhymers first begin to wrangle,
To make old women fat, or young men haggard,
Serving, in short, to idolize or blackguard—

VIII.

Two things, which, in republics, are of use
 In doing many things which must be done;
 Torrents of admiration or abuse
 Would cause a rupture if forbid to run,
 And these the common vehicles men choose
 To keep life stirring when 'tis well begun;
 It matters little who has praise or blame—
 Just send them out, the effect is all the same.

IX.

Blame, may be, is the cheapest, certainly
 It's something more conveniently come by
 When our best schemes comes out "nolle prosequi"
 Or (worse than all), our pride is knocked in "pi;"
 That last is printer's phrase, none, that I see
 Have any better privilege than I,
 For Pulci's stanzas, generally speaking,
 Keep the first publisher, if paid, from breaking.

X.

Hold off! I did not mean to introduce
 That last word here, I'll use it some months hence,
 When I am not so poor I need refuse
 To lend a brother rhymers eighteen pence,
 I may hope vainly, but my fancy's loose
 And full of hopes, to fill the future tense;
 Apathy makes a capital endurer,
 And, if no richer, I can not get poorer.

XI.

But to return: this stanza's very like
 Life as it is, perhaps life as it should be—
 Not smiles and tears, but jest and earnest, quick
 As a true follower of life's changes would be,
 Containing, probably, the greatest trick
 That ever would be, or that ever could be—
 Given to force success; not truth, stability,
 Not earnest, even, but better—versatility.

XII.

The world's great touchstone of success, the means
 By which men grow, being good wits and dancers,
 To outstrip those, with twenty times the brains,
 Who do not happen to have ready answers,
 Proves that the ready eye, and hand it trains,
 Are all things to the world's actors and fencers,
 And if you doubt it, see who leads the fashion—
 One whose first motto of success is, "Dash on!"

XIII.

Who talks of things just in their proper places,
 Fondles the mother's pet, kisses the baby,
 Shows oldest daughters some new-fangled graces,
 And listens to the father's last new hobby,
 Imitates an old aunt, whose weazen face is
 Demure and matronly, as aunt's face may be;
 You know the consequences, he's successful
 In several things that make existence blissful.

XIV.

Raleigh's an instance very much in point:
 The courtier is apparent in his history,
 Bows that were, plainly, never out of joint, [ter, he
 And cloaks for foot-cloths to Queen Mary's sis-
 Formed into fortune, wealth, and fame—aroint!
 Witchcraft and that intolerable mystery!
 The secret of success is in the will
 And in the quick perception of its skill.

XV.

But to the moon:—Don't credit that assertion
 That the moon's mischievous, believe it is
 At the best reckoning a foul aspersion,
 Approaching very nearly to a quizz,

The man who would say so, would pull the curtain
 From half the ancients' best mythologies,
 Tear down Jove, Juno, Vulcan, Venus, Dian,
 And eat the supper of the gods with Cayenne!

XVI.

Dian, Diana, chaste, pure, beautiful,
 Cold, frosty, everything that's unapproachable,
 Fair, pale, snow-circled (catalogues are dull
 And in the present case the list's untouchable),
 The templed one of temple-builders all,
 The sonnetized of sonneteers unvouchable—
 I'm sorry that the time has ever been
 When the moon's character must bear a stain.

XVII.

But so our glories fall—the sculptured shaft,
 The chiselled pillar, in her marble dome,
 Are with the things of bygone ages left;
 The Ephesian oracle looks on her home
 Of the past days, when the blue surges lift
 The crescent from its pillow in their foam,
 But looks, alas! to see the spirit stride
 Over the crumbling ruins in his pride.

XVIII.

Time was, and is not—of Diana's fame
 Ephesus is a heap of crumbling stones
 Alone remaining where the conquerors came.
 All nations, haply, have their sinking moans,
 And all shall mourn when the decaying flame
 Flickers o'er hero's dust and hero's bones—
 Whether the hero vanished in his fall,
 Or lingers in the marble pedestal.

XIX.

So far as love is purely sentimental,
 The moon is quite agreeable, no more
 The bosom grows far cheaper in its rental
 Beneath her nameless and unspoken lore;
 I would not speak so freely, but I went all
 One fading summer, with my mind set o'er
 Bright gems and starlight, and the full moon set
 I know not how much in the coronet.

XX.

There is a time when words are sacrilege,
 When the slight touch runs quivering through
 the frame,
 When the full heart grows prophet, saint, and sage,
 And lives whole centuries in a moment's flame,
 When the last sentence of the mystic page
 Rolls back upon the spirit whence it came,
 And we are love—holy and saddened love—
 For once in life, the fearful trembling dove!

XXI.

There is a time, when, in the silent one
 With the full bosom and the trembling eye,
 Half from remembrance and the future, won,
 The soft warm teardrop trembling to the sky,
 We bow to the one spirit who alone
 Would be our recompense to clasp and die—
 Bow, with a voiceless truth, a silent yearning,
 That in all life shall never know returning.

XXII.

Moonlight and melody—there was a spell
 One summer eve that I have sung of old,
 There was a lay the wind bore up the dell,
 Creeping into the heart with silent hold,
 A joyous cadence, and a weeping trill,
 Bringing up feelings, warm by turns, and cold,
 Touched by a friendly hand that even now
 In one short lay can overcast my brow.

XXIII.

And now they are united—I look up
 To the calm moon, and almost think I hear
 That old familiar lay of changing hope
 Borne o'er the sleeping valley to my ear,
 Bringing up one who under this broad cope
 Shall ne'er again be my companion here,
 Whose phantasy recalls forgotten days—
 Forgotten all, save in their living lays :—

1.

To thee by moonlight I have given
 My dreams of earth, my hopes of heaven,
 Lady—lady !
 Drink of this cup, no slavish wine :
 The goblet holds a heart of mine,
 Lady sweet !

2.

To thee by moonlight, o'er the dell
 Beat hearts that love thee—oh ! how well—
 Lady—lady !
 But though the measure be so dear,
 I would that thou couldst linger here,
 Lady sweet !

3.

To thee by moonlight—one to thee,
 Another to the wild and free,
 Lady—lady !
 Tears tremble on the verge of bliss,
 Time ne'er shall be so sweet as this,
 Lady sweet !

4.

Shall other hands be fondly prest ?
 Another heart beat near thy breast ?
 Lady—lady !
 Speak, but in silence : tell me now,
 With woman's kiss upon my brow,
 Lady sweet !

XXIV.

There is a time that springs, as flowers spring,
 Forth from a bud that has no second blowing ;
 There is a time that mocks the eagle's wing,
 And will not calmly bend to man's bestowing ;
 There is a time when recollections cling
 Yet sadder, in the last hour they are going ;
 There is a time when the first feelings centre,
 Whose like again the bosom ne'er will enter !

XXV.

I'm wiser now—if knowing more is wiser—
 Something I find not difficult to doubt ;
 We ne'er know Wisdom well, till we despise her,
 She throws so many of our feelings out—
 For young Affection is an early-riser :
 Her sister cold waits till the sun's about ;
 So I love moonlight still, and I'll defend it,
 Until the moon's last setting, or mine, end it !

XXVI.

The deuce is in dark galleries !—If that
 Had been the assertion Byron made, no question
 I should have marked it down as very “ pat,”
 And only once demanding my digestion ;
 But when the contradiction is so flat,
 It must be owing to our joint digression :
 Neither one caring for his speech a moment,
 Whether he knocks it down in his next comment.

XXVII.

'Tis the first time I've neared the real subject
 In that one thought, though it is true I promised
 To make a dash at Juan and his object, [pumiced,
 When the last canto came out smoothed and

But I forgot it in things bright and abject—
 Some rather light and very trifling—some iced
 After the manner most approved and proper
 Of hiding grains of gold in tons of copper.

XXVIII.

So let me be historian in brief,
 And say to you that your imaginations
 May take it up where Byron turned the leaf
 And formed all sorts of pleasant recreations :
 Among which, quite conspicuous and chief,
 Were kisses, and the other small sensations
 Of love, when lawless and unchained, and free
 To be as generous as it seeks to be.

XXIX.

The index was a true one for the book ;
 The dutchess of Fitz Fulke was fair and frail,
 Juan, the lover, had a saucy look,
 And his words sparkled like rich wine and ale ;
 And the impression that your eye first took
 Of his high passions was not known to fail :
 There was no shrinking, when the moment came
 (I grieve to say it), even back from shame !

XXX.

There are but few pure ends in life—but few
 That bear the sun of morning ; but the gloom
 Thrown in the fading twilight o'er the view
 In the dark corners of a curtained room
 May seem to hallow things most foul : I knew
 A cankered rose that still gave out perfume,
 And I have known “ fair women and brave men”
 Sinning in darkness as the two sinned then.

XXXI.

Night, with its darkness and its silence—night
 In an old abbey, with the ghosts and rats—
 Would put a reasonable man in fright,
 And make him pray for candles and for cats.
 With woman, it is tolerable, quite,
 And whispering makes one forget the bats ;
 And lips too near for whispering, with some,
 May be most valued when they are most dumb.

XXXII.

Hours pass, nights fly, people go home to bed,
 Dreaming of those they parted from—the kiss
 Of human love, from lips so warmly shed,
 Leaving a taste of long-remembered bliss ;
 And there are some who grope with stealthy tread
 To dreams less pure : form your own mind of this ;
 My business is with morn and morning light—
 I seldom think, I only live, at night.

XXXIII.

'Twas morn at Norman Abbey—it had been
 That year the same thing several times before,
 And very probably there has been seen
 The same phenomenon as many more—
 Of the sun up ; making it very vain
 Even to woo sleep by a waking snore :
 For gentle sleep, by day I can not win her,
 Except an hour or two, just after dinner.

XXXIV.

And Juan woke, turned over, yawned, looked out,
 Saw some things dull, and some things entertain—
 Some half a dozen grooms, who frisked about, [ing :
 With half a dozen horses held in training ;
 Two noblemen, with an incipient gout, [ing ;
 Who thought fresh air good for the first complain—
 Two dogs—and here he rolled back on his pillow,
 And thought the morn was very bright and mellow

XXXV.

It was, in truth, a bright, bright, sunny morn,
 With August dews just sparkling on the grass,
 The silvery night-mist on the valley born,
 Passing away as all bright vapors pass—
 A fitting time for the clear ringing horn
 To call a gallant company to the chase;
 And worthy of the gallant stag, who held
 The meed of hunting in the days of eld.

XXXVI.

A horn rang : o'er that broad and fair domain
 Bounded the echoes, touching here and there,
 As if in coquetry—o'er hill and plain
 Rang farther off and died upon the air,
 A merry sound to the rich, titled train,
 Who that day's sport were privileged to share—
 The signal of the fox-chase, and upsprung
 From couch and pillow that divided throng.

XXXVII.

The hunt was up, not the old stag affair,
 But one of England's later-time fox-chases,
 Where men rode precipices to a hair, [places,
 And dashed worn steeds down very dangerous
 And showed, crossing a country not too square,
 Some speed might shame our fashionable races :
 The dangerous part you'll have no room to doubt,
 Before I've finished this short canto out !

XXXVIII.

And they who backed a courser properly,
 And did not fear gulleys and deeper ditches,
 Prepared to make it a grand sporting-day,
 And to receive a few slight falls and pitches,
 By taking coffee, chocolate, and tea, [breeches
 Quite early; some brushed up top-boots and
 From a small covering of superfluous mud,
 Got the last time they showed their hunting-blood.

XXXIX.

Those who did not ride, slept, or so pretended
 By way of being fashionable, very,
 Night, in their practice, by next noon was ended ;
 By twelve again, they were both grave and merry
 On some flirtation just begun or mended,
 Or (older ones) an extra dozen of sherry :
 Both (love and wine) admitted elevators
 Of soberest men and wisest agitators.

XL.

But the choice spirits met at chocolate—
 I would say breakfast, had it been a breakfast—
 A meal which only half were visibly at,
 Of those who had the fortitude to wake fast,
 And whose digestive organs were in state,
 What they did take, in very truth to take fast :
 A kind of preparation for excursion
 Which makes the whole proceeding my aversion.

XLI.

The ladies were, in truth, well represented
 In the fox-hunting clique—some half a dozen
 With whom we may be gloriously contented,
 Formed of the very ones we would have chosen
 For wit or beauty, or, as I have hinted,
 Well qualified a restif steed to cozen—
 On whom the riding-caps and riding-dresses [ses :
 Matched well with gay, bright eyes and flowing tress-

XLII.

The lady Adeline, who rode, of course ;
 The dutchess of Fitz Fulke, who rode by nature ;
 Aurora Raby, who caressed a horse
 As if she idolized the glorious creature ;

Two countesses of Blank, no whit the worse
 For the sarcasm of which each shared a feature ;
 Another, dull, perhaps, and maybe witty,
 But on my honor, I assure you, pretty.

XLIII.

The nobler sex (pardon me) had enlisted
 All the most prominent figures in our circle :
 The Don, in whom we all are interested—
 Lord Fitz Plantagenet, who ne'er failed to work
 Convenient ways to have his valor tested, [all
 By treating Juan like a turbaned Turk—all
 Extremely proper, as he judged affairs,
 And more so, had he owned more eyes and ears :

XLIV.

I mean eyes capable of seeing through
 Solid stone walls, and long, dark galleries ;
 And ears that might have heard the words that flow
 From deep and headstrong passions when they
 For, let it be remembered, our own two [rise,
 Betrayed no symptom by their lips or eyes
 That morning, of the wonderful extent
 To which warm intimacies sometimes went !

XLV.

'Tis part of the apprenticeship of love—
 Equivocal, I mean—how to dissemble :
 To bid the pulses cease when they would move,
 To make the lips be still when they would trem-
 To make the eyes forget a natural rove— [ble,
 In short, to act like Siddons or John Kemble
 The part that's necessary, and no more :
 The education's not complete before.

XLVI.

The Don, Lord Fitz Plantagenet, Lord Henry,
 Sir Harry Silver Cup, three earls, a baron,
 And several of the less important gentry,
 That understood hard riding and hard swearing,
 Were mounted for the field ; the lord's tenantry,
 Used to Lord Henry's mood, Lord Henry's faring,
 In numbers quite uncounted and uncared for,
 The hunting drudgery were well prepared for.

XLVII.

Loose rein, put spur ! (as Willis says)—they sprung
 Forth for a level run upon the plain ;
 But, not as usual, Juan's courser hung
 Even and smoothly at the dutchess' rein ;
 Not as his wont his bridle-hand was flung,
 The veriest sportsman of that sporting train—
 He seemed a laggard—something strange for him—
 Whose very jockey-cap was always trim.

XLVIII.

Men will ride so when thinking ; sometimes, only,
 I've seen them dash the tired and panting steed
 Into a foam unfeeling and unmanly—
 Thinking, poor fools ! to flee the barbed reed
 They bore within, in a heart worn and lonely,
 Or seared and blackened by Crime's iron tread :
 Juan had very little of this sorrow,
 And only thought what lay beyond the morrow.

XLIX.

Love's brightest fetters are not always golden,
 Her cords not always silken—so they chafe ;
 Her votary on one side is held beholden,
 And on the other side is held unsafe ;
 The consciousness of power will embolden
 To some things which will make attachment brief,
 And Juan thought there might be more of trouble
 In getting single than in getting double !

L.

He feared the dutchess—that is, he might grow
Tired before she did, and a scene might break
Some consequences that would give a blow
To what he half designed to undertake,
And his design, if I may call it so,
Was only—what d’ye think it was? to make
(Characteristic of Don Juan maybe),
A second Haidee of Aurora Raby.

LI.

But the cry rang; hound, horse, and rider, bent
Eye, nerve, and feeling, to the glorious chase;
With an impatient movement, Juan lent
A sportsman’s ardor to the coming race,
And as his trained steed with the foremost went,
They hardly marked that he had changed his
It seemed so like Don Juan, to be first [place,
When the cry opened, and the cover burst.

LII.

The hedge, the ditch, two bounds, and they were
A five-bar gate stood ready for the third, [past;
Our lady train could hardly be the last,
When “faster and yet faster” was the word;
The reader in his mind can follow best,
And fancy nothing wonderful occurred,
Till Reynard doubled—on the very track,
The chase and the pursuers bounded back.

LIII.

The chase grew hot, but fox and hounds led off,
And the lithe riders fell back, one by one,
As horse by horse proved of inferior stuff,
Till of the twenty who had first begun,
But two were rode well, or showed blood enough
To keep the hot pursuit still urging on,
With any hope to see its closing yet,
Of course, Don Juan and Plantagenet.

LIV.

I’ve dropped the Fitz there for the rhyme alone,
And hope the Fitzes will of course excuse me,
Although it is a habit with me grown,
Of using other’s names as others use me;
That is, clip off one half, so nicely done
I do not mind; the public won’t abuse me
For that sin very much, so let me strain
Your courtesy if I should clip again.

LV.

Onward went fox and hounds, and onward still,
As if they followed in the very track,
Went Juan and his rival, with a will,
But little observation, and no reck,
As they swept o’er an open field, until
The Don’s steed held the better by a neck,
And seemed resolved to hold it if he could;
Plantagenet thought “curse him if he should!”

LVI.

Which might have won, and come in first at death
(The fox’s), no one knows, an ugly wall
Broken half down (the stones lay round beneath),
That had been, and was yet, exceeding tall,
Bounded the prospect; men who cared for breath
Would have done as the rest did, one and all,
They swept around it, but did Juan mind them?
Did he or his antagonist look behind them?

LVII.

Not so. They spurred their horses at the wall,
Juan’s went over and rolled on the ground
With both forelegs bent under like a ball,
And broken short, so Juan’s head spun round,

And Juan’s self, with speed and shock and fall,
Was fitted for a monumental mound,
By having fourteen fractured ribs bespoken,
His neck about half, and his arm quite broken.

LVIII.

Lord Fitz Plantagenet was spared the pain,
The trouble and expense of such a shock,
His horse raised at the wall, but raised in vain,
Fell back, and crushed him like a ponderous rock;
With such a falling weight on neck and brain,
’Twas little marvel that his whole neck broke;
Beneath the fallen horse a stream ran out,
Blood from a body dead enough no doubt.

LIX.

One lay each side the wall, and of the number
One broke his horse’s neck, and one his own.
He would have been, if rightly I remember,
The earl of Somewhere if he had lived on,
But he was laid in a foxhunting slumber,
Among a heap of monumental stone;
Stars, garters, blazoned shields, and all the rest,
That makes a man rot pleasantly at last.

LX.

Not till some days had passed; but this one ends
His life and our connexion, and the duties
Called burial, attended by one’s friends,
Are full of rather melancholy beauties;
The sins we have, our burial seldom mends,
And every fault, a friend will tell how true ’tis,
It is as well, perhaps, to close with breath,
And make a final reckoning time at death.

LXI.

But onward dashed the train—You’ll not suppose
The tragedy entirely without witness,
For as the noble steeds for that leap rose, [fleetness,
And fell worn out by their strained struggling
The warning shout on many pale lips froze
Half muttered, at the danger and unfitness,
There was one shriek rang out as Juan fell,
But whose lips gave it, no one there could tell.

LXII.

Was it the dutchess, or Aurora Raby?
Or the cold haughty Lady Adeline?
That her grace did not shriek, was proper, maybe,
To give suspicion’s ear no outward sign,
And that Aurora did not act the baby,
Dwelt far more with her conscience than with
That Lady Adeline did both genteelly, [mine;
Though quite unnoticed, I will make oath freely.

LXIII.

Quick drew the reins, and every saddle seat
Was empty, as they flung them to the ground,
And found that Juan’s heart had yet a beat;
By one delirious stare his eyes threw round,
’Twas hardly longer real death to meet,
When Fitz Plantagenet’s crushed form they
Juan relapsed into apparent death, [found;
A mockery too complete for living breath.

LXIV.

And yet, he lived; a litter and a bier
Bore back to Norman Abbey two young forms,
That, gay that morning with the hunter’s cheer,
Were fitted, one for doctors, one for worms;
Both species in their practice, quite severe,
Both fatal to all limbs, from legs to arms,
Both necessary, one to fill a grave,
The other, to take fees, and kill, and save.

LXV.

Both in a worldly sense, I will confess
 We charge too much upon our fellow-man—
 Of good or evil, heap up too much stress
 On what is but a part of God's great plan
 Say that prosperity or ill success
 Lays men too often under praise or ban,
 That, as a general principle, physicians
 Do not endeavor to make worse conditions.

LXVI.

Lawyer, priest, doctor, are a common stock
 Of rich joke for the satirist's enjoyment,
 Thin patient, clients' purse, neglected flock,
 Are all well-recognised as wit's employment,
 But half the "fun," well-sifted, is a mock,
 The debt we owe professions to destroy meant,
 And we succeed, though the crowd's laughter tickle
 In being flat, and palpably ridiculous. [us

LXVII.

Wit turns back on the poet, there, thank Heaven,
 There's little ridicule, because no envy,
 He has no stateliness to be forgiven,
 And little of the gold of other men, he
 Makes no pretensions to the inflated heaven
 That puffs up the professions—well, what then?
 Like the professions, busy, proud, and useful, [he,
 Smiles as they do, when the rest grow abusive.

LXVIII.

The doctors must be had; this seemed the case
 At Norman Abbey, so the nearest cure
 (Not minister) came at a doctor's pace,
 And dropping reins to servants at the door,
 Bowed in a most portentous looking face,
 With a small body following, to be sure,
 And a prodigious pair of specs preceding,
 That might have served any old grandame's reading,

LXIX.

Took snuff, declared the case was very bad,
 The gentleman was most compoundly fractured,
 Inquired how he was hurt, but thought he had
 Seen cases quite as difficult, well doctored—
 Applied some bandages, was very glad
 He'd heard old Doctor Splinters when he lectured,
 Showed out his erudition and his sorrow,
 And took leave promising to call "to-morrow."

LXX.

Night closed upon the abbey: fever crept
 Upon the bruised Don Juan, by his side
 There had been watchers, but the watch they kept
 Had yielded to propriety and pride.
 Lord Henry not yet home, the dutchess slept—
 Something fatigued after her morning's ride,
 The dead lord had departed, and with him,
 That thought of death that makes the heart so dim.

LXXI.

Evening yet drew, and, as it had not been
 Since Norman Abbey filled that year with guests,
 The evening lamp shone on no brilliant scene,
 Mirth seemed to have gone out from selfish breasts,
 Prompt courtesy demanded, at the mean,
 For that sad day one night from heartless quests;
 How much of real kindness had its sway
 In that night's stillness, it needs not to say.

LXXII.

And they had skipped some time, pillows were prest
 At that unfashionable hour, and sleep
 Came e'en to idleness, it may be guessed
 Those who had witnessed all that fearful leap

Slumbered not quite so calmly as the rest,
 And one saw in her dreams a mangled heap
 That bore two faces, it is plain to draw
 The forms and figures that Aurora saw.

LXXIII.

And Juan was alone, beside the bed
 Stood some few things upon a covered stand
 So near, that in the fever's hour of dread
 He might have dashed them from the table, and
 As pallid as the pillow at his head
 Lay on the sheet his one uninjured hand;
 The nurse was where nurses will be sometimes
 In real life, and so of course in rhymes.

LXXIV.

He slept, he dreamed; oh, burning fever-dreams,
 It needs not that I whisper what ye are,
 It needs not that I speak life's wasted aims,
 Or tell again the shadowy clouds that mar
 The dawning light of fancy in her beams,
 Setting between my soul and hope, a bar
 That will not be removed, and it needs not
 Here that I paint again my own dark lot,

LXXV.

But at my elbow parted friendship stands,
 And close beside me lies a wasted form
 With glaring eyeballs, and with tossing hands,
 Tossed like oak branches in an autumn storm,
 The stranger's legacy from other lands
 Of his rich youth to the devouring worm,
 This, this is fever, this is fever's dream,
 And I run wild on this congenial theme.

LXXVI.

He slept, he dreamed; they tell me that the soul
 Reveals in dreams its hidden spots of sin,
 The darker feelings waking hours control
 In the unguarded hour let vision in!
 I know that dreams have helped me to unroll
 Brightness, where I deemed not that it had been,
 And from the sleeper's lips I have drawn more
 Of true affection than I dreamed before.

LXXVII.

Hark! from the sleeper's lips a smothered cry,
 A "bubbling groan" half-broken, till it sinks
 To the unwritten fervor of a sigh,
 Or rings in a low kiss, like silver links—
 Brings back a voice of youthful memory,
 And tells us that again the dreamer thinks
 The love he feigns for the world's outward sight,
 The birth of what is grown an old delight.

LXXVIII.

Was he alone? There came a stilly step
 As of a mother by her sick child's couch,
 And as she saw he slept, finger on lip,
 The carpet-math scarce yielding to the touch
 Of that light careful footstep, with a sip [much.
 Of the warm breath lest she had breathed too
 As if her whole soul on the sleeper centred,
 The lady Adeline looked in and entered.

LXXIX.

Was he alone? Not so, she took the seat
 By his bedside, and looked upon his face,
 And tried the temples' faint and fluttering beat
 By the dim lamplight shed around, to trace;
 Bent, till her very breath, so warm and sweet,
 Mingled with his, almost in an embrace,
 Bent down and listened, as the fever gave
 A buried name from its untimely grave.

LXXX.

And Juan spoke of Haidee; was it not [now,
 Strange that his first love slept—Spain came not
 But that lone Grecian isle, its lonelier grot,
 And a young girl with angel eyes and brow,
 Who deemed it heaven, in her untutored lot,
 To hold him on her bosom, and to grow
 Beloved and loving, all incorporate
 With his wild dreamy soul and wayward fate.

LXXXI.

His fevered lips opened with Haidee's name,
 He called her with the loving voice of old,
 When Juan was not bowed to regal shame,
 The minion of rich luxury and gold,
 His lips made mockery of that parted claim,
 His hand half-raised the lost one to enfold,
 And then there was a start, a feverish start,
 A groan, as if it pierced him to the heart.

LXXXII.

Lambro stood o'er him, and the minstrel lay
 Of grief for Greece, died on the sounding string,
 Till the last tone in terror passed away,
 An agonizing shriek that none may sing,
 The fingers worked and clutched convulsively
 As if they grasped a steel, a darker wing
 Still darker, passed across the horizon,
 And that lost face and buried name were gone.

LXXXIII.

So he had loved, and had been loved as well,
 The lady Adeline knew from his voice,
 Knew there had been a time when ruin fell
 Upon his young affection and his choice,
 And pitied him, how much I may not tell,
 Whether she did not feel his buried joys,
 Whether she did not wish her name had been
 The one bright spot that memory kept so green.

LXXXIV.

The "frozen wine" was thawing, that within
 Melted it gently, imperceptibly,
 As unpolluted and as free from sin
 As when it kept that frozen lethargy,
 And though such meltings, when they once begin,
 Sometimes warm icebergs to a boiling sea,
 In this, not so, the lady Adeline
 Shall never sully on a page of mine.

LXXXV.

Did she love Juan? not if love is fire
 And fire for ever, not if love allures
 Ever to sensual feeling and desire,
 But if love sometimes filters, fades, and pures—
 Till brightest incense burns upon the pyre
 And glories most in what it most endures,
 And not the incense it receives—then sooth
 She loved, half idolized, that graceless youth.

LXXXVI.

The Donna Julia loved him for his love,
 And Haidee for himself, Gulbeyaz sought him
 As a plaything, the empress matched the move,
 And as a minion to her pleasure bought him,
 Young, noble, and a Don, all given to prove
 Self, in the flatteries that London brought him,
 The dutchess of Fitz Fulke found more than danger,
 In the attractions of the "handsome stranger."

LXXXVII.

All far apart, yet here there was another
 And different in its being from the rest,
 Not feeling as a sister for a brother,
 That never knows a pulse of sweet unrest,

Not the same feeling that the tender mother
 Is proud to nurse in her maternal breast,
 Yet like them both, in the still calm delight
 That seems necessity, and almost right.

LXXXVIII.

But for comparison, I had half meant
 To call in Willis and his Lady Jane,
 To say that Lady Adeline's intent
 Of loving and of bearing all the pain,
 Was very like the being he has sent
 To swell so sadly the ideal train,
 Like her in her devotion, not like her
 In playing, without risk, the worshipper.

LXXXIX.

But the world holds a difference; she who took
 Young Jules a boy, and learned him to be man,
 In step and gesture, in his speech and look,
 And trained his gushing feelings till they ran
 Far from her bosom, like a truant brook
 That leaves in waywardness its native glen,
 She was not bound unto another's name,
 And love acknowledged, wrought no other shame.

XC.

Sweet Lady Jane, her history is wrought
 As few men living could have written it,
 By one who in society and thought
 Has made himself a privilege to sit
 Among the loved of genius—fearing naught
 From the unkindness of the critics' wit,
 Wrought by a name that honors our bright land,
 Wrought by a poet's heart and poet's hand.

XCI.

Ah well, the lady Adeline had married
 As marriages are done in England often,
 In circumstances where broad lands are carried
 By marriage settlements with house and croft in,
 In circumstances where both sides are hurried,
 With much to irritate, little to soften,
 Where if both parties are not too ill-natured
 They have few quarrels, very little hatred,

XCII.

And not a spark of love. Oh riches, riches,
 Oh rank, oh fortune, noble blood and title!
 The dull plebeians whom your sound bewitches,
 Would judg'd a difference if they judge aright all,
 They might see some aristocratic hitches,
 And aristocracy with no requital, [through,
 They might see, could they read the whole page
 Some things that would not make them envy you.

XCIII.

For instance—ill-assorted marriages,
 One of the curses of a high-born race,
 Collectively, from kings and princesses
 To several degrees below "your grace"—
 That lays much stress on some conveniences,
 And gives affection very little place,
 The consequence is—sometimes hate inherent,
 And sometimes doubt about the heir apparent.

XCIV.

The earl of C. marries my lady A.,
 Their two estates make such a nice ring-fence,
 My lady chanced, before he stopped the way,
 To love Sir Simon L.; on some pretence,
 Sir Simon visits them sometimes a day,
 And gets detained by trivial accidents,
 Till, what? as husbands are such touchy fellows,
 The earl grows most unreasonably jealous.

XCV.

The earl of D. marries my lady S.,
 Who happens never to have loved at all,
 To have a heart in total emptiness,
 The likelier to catch what love may fall;
 And the new countess in a brilliant dress,
 Captures a hussar colonel at a ball,
 Happens herself to be more captivated,
 And leaves the unpleasant consequences stated.

XCVI.

All this, to build myself a broad platform,
 On which to plant a valuable maxim,
 If the world follow my judicial arm
 And budget of advice, when I annex them,
 'Twill prove a kind of talismanic charm,
 And pay them for the words with which I tax
In the most cases, as a general principle, [them:
Marriage without affection's reprehensible.

XCVII.

The lady Adeline was Lord Henry's wife,
 And he had sought and wooed, proposed and won
 Treated her always, to be true and brief, [her,
 With a wife's duty and a husband's honor;
 His mind, not cold, was formal, and as stiff,
 As were the pleasant nothings he had done her;
 For heart—he'd given her what he possessed,
 Parliament and the public had the rest.

XCVIII.

He loved her, as he loved all womankind,
 No doubt a little more from circumstances,
 As he could not help bringing up to mind,
 How when a "fiancée" she'd shared his dances,
 Avowal and acceptation linked behind,
 With all that he was capable, in glances;
 He loved her as a man who can not love
 The springing wildwood and the cooing dove!

XCIX.

He loved her with respect, so she loved him,
 So she had loved him, for their wedded years,
 And though her queen-like eyes had ne'er been dim
 For cold Lord Henry with a woman's tears,
 Though she kept not over his every limb,
 The trembling watch of woman's murmuring
 Had not Don Juan woke her with a start, [fears,
 She still had deemed herself without a heart.

C.

But Juan came, she looked on him with pleasure,
 And took his moral character in charge,
 And (as the reader knows) tried in a measure,
 To save him from her grace's conquering barge,
 Might ne'er have known what she began to treasure
 In thoughts, till Juan's fall set them at large,
 And stood beside and loved him as he slept,
 With thoughts as pure as vestal ever kept.

CI.

Thoughts that she never stained, for on the page
 Of woman's weakness and of woman's art,
 'Tis pleasant to lay down a brighter gage,
 To tell that her true bosom owes the heart
 To virtue and to honor, that the sage
 Who played so many years the pilgrim's part,
 Found at the last, with gems from earth and sea,
 His brightest jewel, woman's purity.

CANTO III.

I.

A MONTH—let's dance and sing and caracole,
 The month in nature, while we skip in rhyme,
 For 'tis the part of wisdom on the whole,
 Among the summer months in such a clime,
 To take things easily; let life and soul
 Drink in the drowsy influence of the time,
 Let's be, wanting the Turk's magnificence,
 Worse than the Turk in drowsy indolence.

II.

Let's dance and sing, when we are not too lazy,
 And take a turn at sleeping, when we are,
 Let's take especial pains not to grow crazy,
 On very knotty points in love or war;
 Let's make an atmosphere pleasant and hazy,
 Through which we only spy a single star,
 And let that star be happily compounded,
 Of love with eastern drapery surrounded.

III.

Oh happiness! the senseless rabble chase thee,
 And will be likely to, till the world ends,
 And when they chance to find, they dare not face
 Or greet in ignorance thy celestial hands, [thee,
 And, of a hundred men, 'tis odds they place thee
 In about ninety-nine quite different lands,
 But let me have my way a year or so,
 And I will hold thee in my clutch, I know,

IV.

And find thee in a paradise—a paradise
 That does not at the present time exist,
 Being bound too much with the world's very narrow
 And wandering too much in a haze of mist, [ties,
 For we permit the houri, though such rarities,
 To flee us, ere we have them fairly kissed;
 Whose fault drives off so soon our sweetest minions,
 Raises a world of different opinions.

V.

Suffice it they are gone; for the groundwork
 Of my small paradise, I'll take the harem
 As it exists among the turbaned Turk,
 With more affection, more of fiarem scarem,
 Less cold authority, that bids hate lurk
 Beneath neglected bosoms when you bare them,
 No eunuchs, no maid mothers, more vitality,
 And if it might be, more of sensuality.

VI.

No slavery—love will not bend to compulsion,
 Although its victims bow to pride and force,
 The bosom flies with shudder and revulsion,
 From a compelled unsympathetic course;
 Know that you can not drive on by propulsion,
 That which was made free as the bounding horse,
 But learn that fondness and a soft caress,
 With springing love the coldest heart will bless.

VII.

There should be silken couch, and mirrored room,
 And forms as airy as the poet's dream,
 And rosy curtains, making a soft gloom
 When day was too intrusive with its beam,
 There should be fountains, vases of perfume,
 And soothing sounds, as of a falling stream,
 There should be forms (and I could name them)
 Weaving light fingers in my clustering hair. [there,

VIII.

But on mature reflection, 'twere as well
 Not to describe my paradise too closely,
 Lest some of my acquaintances rebel,
 And think my morals sit on me too loosely;
 'Tis what I would be, never what I shall,
 For here, it seems, love runs not so profusely,
 And though your humble servant may not bless it,
 Expects to live right moral from necessity. [he

IX.

But foremost in my mind has always been,
 A sense of good they call the paramount,
 That helps me through whatever stage I'm in,
 And takes the current sides into account;
 And one good maxim I have learned to win,
 By dipping in this very moral fount,
 And that is, when I can not get the best,
 To make myself contented with the rest.

X.

There's little prospect from my horoscope,
 Of being eastern emperor or vizier;
 I do not think (to judge my present scope)
 That I shall ever be a man of pleasure;
 Riches are far beyond my utmost hope,
 To mark the sinking of paternal treasure,
 And what remains? To let the dog-star rage,
 And deem myself the happiest of the age.

XI.

To be as indolent as possible,
 To grow as happy as my friends will let me,
 To have my locks curled pleasantly and well
 By one who well remembers to forget me,
 But throw out a few sparks from my heart's hell,
 When they are so imprudent as to fret me,
 To laugh and weep at fortune and fatality,
 And skip a month in rhyme and in reality.

XII.

We've dropped an early friend—left Juan lying
 In an extremely pleasant, quiet bed,
 Not very well, and not precisely dying,
 But with life's cord a very brittle thread,
 That the tired bird might chafe apart by flying;
 With fevered brain, a watcher by his head,
 At nine or ten o'clock, one August night,
 Unconscious of the gazer or her sight.

XIII.

And, like a thousand things that I might name,
 He's changed his place while I have moralized,
 And truth, my motive was almost the same
 In that month's sleep, so I am not surprised,
 But hope congratulations I may claim,
 On having him so mended and revised;
 You will be glad that, free from fall and fever,
 Don Juan was almost as well as ever.

XIV.

And Norman Abbey was a quiet place,
 To what it had been but a month before;
 The troop of votaries from pleasure's chase,
 Had just gone back into her festal door,
 London, of course, where, in the changing race,
 How many died, or killed how many more,
 I'll leave to free conjecture—they departed,
 All reinvented, and some thankless-hearted:

XV.

To rail against Lord Henry's shocking wine,
 To tell how shocking Lady Henry looked,
 To draw comparisons that are not mine,
 Being a deal too cutting to be booked;

To take from their retirement a new shine,
 To dip in every dish that London cooked,
 To be, some curious, and a few malicious,
 And fewer kind, in seasoning scandal's dishes.

XVI.

Sir Harry Silver Cup went to the races,
 Longbow to Ireland, Strongbow to the Tweed,
 And many sporting men to different places,
 Of whose-exact spot there is little need;
 All left so very quietly, their faces
 Were only missed by missing groom and steed.
 Hist! stay! There was one parting rather sudden,
 That all the guests pronounced a very odd one.

XVII.

One morn, 'twas just two weeks before our tale
 Reopens, opened a new kind of annals,
 The dutchess of Fitz Fulke, carriage and all,
 With grooms, outriders, coroneted panels,
 And so et cetera, rolled from the hall,
 After unusual care of trunks and flannels,
 And her ripe grace being handed in the side,
 In a new mood of quite becoming pride.

XVIII.

Her grace forgot, or scorned, to say farewell,
 To judge from looks and actions, and she passed
 ('Twas noticed, you may guess, and told as well)
 The lady Adeline with a scornful cast,
 Nodded Lord Henry, as if she would chill,
 And turned away with half a glance at last;
 Behavior very uncouth in a guest,
 But quite reciprocated, at the least.

XIX.

With our old privilege of entering
 Into all hidden undiscovered mysteries,
 In which we imitate sometimes Tom King,
 And sometimes presbyterian consistories,
 We'll dive into this mooted doubt, and bring
 To light, all possible in all their histories,
 And, if we can, resolve this striking doubt,
 Of what put guest and hostess so much out.

XX.

One night had told too much, and while the lady
 Sat by the sleeper's bedside, she had heard
 The strange but sweet name of the Grecian Haidee,
 And one that seemed a more familiar word,
 And, knowing not a thought of what he said, he
 Revealed enough to have suspicion stirred
 Of that dark gallery, and its living ghost,
 Still more, till one suspicion drew a host.

XXI.

And strange to say, next day, behind the curtain
 In her fair grace's bedroom, there were found
 A cloak and cowl, and very like, 'tis certain,
 To those worn by the friar in his round,
 And such a mind as Adeline's, alert in
 The qualities with which police abound,
 Drew inferences in themselves quite savorable,
 And with quite truth enough to be unfavorable.

XXII.

What followed? something very womanlike,
 And manlike also, if the truth is known,
 The common tendency in blame to strike
 The one whose character is hurt, alone:
 Let me be understood—both Kate and Dick
 Think of the woman's frailty with a groan,
 But quite forget the proper share of blame,
 To him who shared the guilt, and should the shame.

XXIII.

She thought the dutchess sadly out of place,
 In spoiling the young gentleman's good morals;
 Felt that she could not quite insult her grace—
 That Norman Abbey was no place for quarrels;
 So Lady Adeline set her mind at ease,
 By being most politely cold before halls
 And dinner-tables—the best way you please
 To put a guest completely off her ease.

XXIV.

The dutchess drew unpleasant inferences:
 Knew that the Lady Adeline was nurse,
 That Juan, in his grateful confidences,
 Might have told all the truth, and made it worse;
 She feared a little for the consequences
 Ending, if made too public, with divorce;
 Grew cold as Lady Adeline, and vowed
 She could be quite as bitter and as proud.

XXV.

And yet she lingered there—was there a why?
 'Twas known the season had not opened yet,
 And she had laid a certain period by
 To spend at the Amundevilles' country-seat:
 She could not leave the abbey quite as I
 Would leave the mansion where I chance to get—
 With—"I would stay much longer, if I could,"
 And the reply, "I really wish you would!"

XXVI.

And yet she lingered there: a sudden whim
 That came into her brain, did more, perhaps,
 To put her pleasant grace in travelling trim
 Than all the past and its hair-breadth escapes:
 Her grace had formed a plan—it would not seem
 That she had bile enough for forming traps,
 But faith! she had—as we shall see them when
 And she dashed unexpectedly to London. [done—

XXVII.

Let's follow her, as they did, in two weeks;
 That means as soon as we can well remove
 Our country scenes to city stones and bricks,
 Summer below to winter spent above;
 Let's look upon the store of summer cheeks
 Doomed to be faded in a winter's "love;"
 Let's look—the Lord knows where—I'm getting
 And this infernal pen is *not* inspired! [tired,

XXVIII.

I am not indolent: oh no!—I write
 When there is not a shadow of occasion;
 I fill my hours of leisure, to indite
 Letters to something less than half the nation;
 But with all my industry—"by this light"
 I tire of manual, mental application; [ows,
 My pen's poor, brain confused—avaunt! ye shad-
 Fly back with Norman Abbey and its meadows!

XXIX.

September—and the world had done with summer,
 And the world crowded, bustled back to town;
 Hotels were filled again, bar-maids in tremor,
 And landlords smoothing out an extra frown:
 About the same was passed by every comer
 That passed in August when he bustled down;
 And Norman Abbey, when its guests departed,
 Bore evident marks of being soon deserted.

XXX.

Lord Henry had a caucus to attend,
 Don Juan, quite recovered, had his mission,
 The Lady Adeline must meet a friend
 Or two, or fifty, and see her physician;

Aurora Raby was in Cumberland,
 And had quite faded from the party's vision:
 They might see her in Blank-Blank square that sea-
 Provided she came back to town and reason! [son,

XXXI.

Don Juan thought he would, or somewhere else;
 And that month's sickness had quite made his
 She had not come to chat and feel his pulse, [mind
 As some had done, a little over-kind;
 Her face (and sometimes 'tis the truth it tells)
 Showed far less pity than he'd hoped to find;
 For the first time in life, Juan was piqued,
 And his self-confidence just slightly kicked.

XXXII.

Once more in Blank-Blank square—by the request
 Of both my lord and lady—he intended
 To be some half a dozen days their guest
 In town, till their returning-calls were ended,
 When he meant solemnly to do his best
 For his forgotten mission, ere he wended
 A step into his own more proper line—
 The south voluptuous and the feminine.

XXXIII.

An evening call at Lady Pinchback's told
 Juan some things not pleasant, but quite new:
 Leila began, how sweetly! to unfold
 Her sweet face to the fashionable view—
 So much retiring, yet so far from cold—
 It plainly was not London where she grew;
 And she was happy, as a fond, warm heart
 Can be, from all affection shut apart.

XXXIV.

She moved among the world of glare and glitter,
 She lived amid right fashionable fineness;
 And the enjoyments wealth alone might get her,
 Had been provided her by Juan's kindness;
 And yet she felt how lonely and how bitter
 Life is without a little loving blindness:
 She felt her life was much unfeeling show—
 She hung on Juan's arm, and told him so!—

XXXV.

And spoke in confidence: she handed him
 A paper, and its leader headed thus:—
 "We feel ourselves something obliged to trim
 'The Herald's' article of so much fuss;
 'Tis plain that some one has imposed on them
 As we would not let them impose on us;
 The elopement in high life is not detected,
 Although the *denouement* is soon expected.

XXXVI.

The parties spoken of have come in town—
 The stranger, Lord A—, and his lady wife."
 Then Juan laid the said newspaper down,
 And turned to Leila: "Well, what now is rife?
 Who are the parties not exactly gone?
 I've not the least conception, on my life!"
 And Leila said, "You have not? you're in danger,
 I know you are—for you're this wicked stranger!"

XXXVII.

"The Herald" of the day before, revealed
 The contradicted article in full:—
 "We're sorry that it can not be concealed
 That Lord A—m—d—v has been a gull:
 The final business yesterday was sealed
 By the quite usual but unlucky pull
 Of an elopement; the frail pair are gone—
 The beauteous Lady A— and the young Don!

XXXVIII.

"'Tis rumored that the lady's the seducer,
In a great measure : a fox-hunting fall,
The gallant Don took, made their union closer,
Without their being much observed by all;
No doubt the young Don hated to refuse her
His best attendance at so gay a call:
This is a warning, as it should be one,
To keep at arm's length foreign Count and Don !"

XXXIX.

Extremely sage, all that—slightly surprising
To one who felt so very innocent,
As the Don did, of any frail advising
With his fair hostess : so Don Juan bent,
While both his anger and his blood were rising,
And asked young Leila "how the story went."
She knew not—she had not been telescopic,
But it had been some days a leading topic.

XL.

Juan was angry, vexed, for many reasons [scribed :
Which may be guessed, and need not be de-
He'd found among the other petty treasours
The fair and young in England had imbibed—
Too great a number of illicit *laisons*
Were even in reality proscribed—
Among the few, I mean; and, of that few,
Was one quite interesting, and quite new—

XLI.

Aurora Raby.—And his better nature
Pitied, ay, pitied Lady Adeline;
He felt how pain must harden every feature
In the rich chiselled face all thought divine;
He felt the cold Lord Henry's nomenclature
At the first mention of a doubtful sign,
Might be called forth for bitter, stern reproach,
Weaving a woof right dangerous to broach.

XLII.

And then—what then ? He did just what we do
When we have opened a right pleasant book :
After just glancing at a page or two,
To see if sermon or romance, we look
At title-page and index—*apropos*,
No doubt, before we eat, to know the cook :
Juan felt curious (enough enough)
To know the author of this pleasant stuff.

XLIII.

"Put that and that together," was his motto,
As it is mine, and was old Socrates' ;
By this, the nicest reasoning may be got to,
In as convenient manner as you please ;
By this, some men have been hung who ought not to,
By this, some rascals have escaped with ease :
All this does not invalidate the saw—
Without exceptions you can't make a law.

XLIV.

He turned to Lady Pinchback, with an air
Of quiet unconcern, and asked if any
Of their last winter's round had settled there
Since their return, and if there had, how many.
None, at their very doors in Blank-Blank square,
But at the next, Lady Sophia Fenny,
A dozen on aristocratic crutches,
And last, not least, their mutual friend the dutchess,

XLV.

Who, she was told (my lady never'd gossip),
Had changed her style of living altogether—
Had driven the quiet crazy, used the cross up,
And proved she valued old friends not a feather ;

Pitched off the glad and gay with just a toss-up,
And lived, in fact, in very frigid weather—
(Cold after heat, you know, calm after thunder,
And ice in August—neither worth a wonder.)

XLVI.

She lived a paragon, *par excellence*,
And had done for two weeks, since she came back
From Norman Abbey, where some late events
Had given her modest feelings quite a quake :
She'd spoken (did not mean it) with comments
Of "the direction things were soon to take,
If Lady Adeline kept her flirtation
With that most precious sample of legation."

XLVII.

So ho ! 'twas all explained, proof positive
To Juan that the dutchess had well planned
To be beforehand with report, and give
The gossips and the cliques to understand
Any attraction he might have, to live
An extra week upon Lord Henry's land,
Might be accounted for, on the requests
Of the fair hostess, and not of her guests.

XLVIII.

Specious pretence, adroitly carried out,
And rightly judged by Juan at a thought :
He read the game that she had woven about,
And felt 'twas quite unpleasant (as he ought) ;
Her rigid morals silenced any doubt
Her grace's previous conduct might have brought ;
London believed (as it believes all lies)
That Adeline was frail, the dutchess wise.

XLIX.

How far the dutchess in her short finesse
Revealed her knowledge of the world, I leave :
Let it be told by those who know it less,
And who are not too indolent to grieve ;
But one idea from it comes to bless,
And that is, that opinion is a sieve—
As all sieves are, it is something uneven,
And nothing certain of how much 'tis leaving !

L.

One thing is certain : let the thief forestall,
And hallo, "Stop thief !" at another's heels—
In the most cases, although not in all,
Truth's chariot will not hurt him with its wheels !
The world will be so sharp in letting fall
Its anger on the one who never steals,
That the keen rogue not only 'scapes its wrath,
But picks an extra pocket in his path.

LI.

Morgan O'Sullivan, sometime reporter,
Was, in my judgment, a philosopher—
Proved in the instance, when, to make time shorter,
He'd roused the sleepy commons with a stir,
And a poor quaker, with a face like Werter,
Sat by—he just accused Penn's follower !—
The officer lugged him off, you may swear,
While Morgan tickled at a joke so rare.

LII.

And yet the joke's not rare ; 'tis only varied
To suit time, place, and anything you like ;
And Morgan's jokes, less innocent, are carried
To the death-hour of many a hapless "Smike ;"
Justice and Truth seem to have been unmarried,
And Justice (unjust) takes first turn to strike :
Truth comes in time to mourn a timeless end—
But such late pity death can hardly mend.

LIII.

So pass we.—There was food for speculation
 In all this rigmarole, to Juan's mind,
 With the best care, he knew his situation
 With the lord Henry, must be most unkind;
 What kind of reasoning or calculation
 In his most subtle logic lurked behind,
 No one can fathom, but he took a course,
 We should expect, to make things grow much worse.

LIV.

He swore, internally, by all things sacred
 He'd meet the incensed dutchess, face to face,
 He'd try if recollected shame could make red
 The brilliant cheek of her most proper grace,
 He'd do a dozen things, would give and take red
 Recriminations as quite in the case,
 But at the least he'd have one satisfaction,
 In letting off the steam that roused his action.

LV.

He thought, no doubt, he should behold her now,
 The lady ripe and graceful, in a blaze
 As usual, of the diamonds' liquid flow,
 With her old quota of bewitching ways,
 He thought to find her whispering very low
 A palliation for the late past days,
 He thought to find her, from the rest estranged,
 But in her weakness for him, never changed.

LVI.

He drew upon erroneous principles,
 Though one would almost know them to be true,
 That the dishonored bosom ne'er rebels
 And ne'er refuses what 'tis used to do.
 I've found that e'en affection coldly swells
 And only gives us half a kiss for two,
 I've made my mind that, as a rule for woman,
 What is once done may not be done in common.

LVII.

Love may go backward, or more like a crab,
 Love may go sideways, with a kind of motion
 Not beneficial to the tales we blab
 About undying love and fond devotion;
 Love may stand still, a still more saucy drab,
 And keep you wavering till you're out of notion,
 And crime (love's most especially) won't refuse,
 When a good chance appears, to slip the noose.

LVIII.

Some six o'clock, and in the ante-room,
 (Next evening) of the dutchess's hotel,
 In a street not remarkable for gloom
 But dark enough to lose its name as well,
 Don Juan sat—a flow of soft perfume,
 An open door, the tinkling of a bell—
 Don Juan stood near where the dutchess sat,
 Queenlike, imperial, noble, and all that.

LIX.

The room was rich, rich, rich and very chaste,
 No ornament but such as one half chilled you,
 There was no lack of an indulgent taste,
 But none of seraphic Venuses killed you,
 No certain that was not correctly placed,
 No Ganymede that Jove's own nectar filled you;
 Naught for the sense, unless that sense was cold,
 Naught save for very stiff, or very old.

LX.

And on a seat of patriarchal ease
 That might have been a couch, or throne, or both,
 Sat the fair dutchess, at his first quick gaze,
 Juan's good breeding barely saved an oath,

The features, that, to look back thirty days,
 Had been ripe beauty or voluptuous sloth,
 Were pride, cold heartless pride, at least the mask,
 And what lay under, who may dare to ask.

LXI.

She was alone—the bow Don Juan made,
 Was but acknowledged with a stately bend
 That scarce a stranger's greeting had repaid,
 And how much less a confidential friend;
 It would have thrown entirely in the shade
 A man of ordinary self-command,
 Or one whose manners had been tutored less
 Than Juan's, in cold inexpressiveness.

LXII.

Bring me a monarch's frown, a prince's scowl,
 A judge's merciless un pitying look,
 A friar frightening a departing soul,
 By the grim aids of candle, bell, and book,
 Bring me Jehangire's features, when the whole
 Of that wild eastern world before him shook,
 But chill us as they will, they fail to freeze
 Like woman's brow in a cold haughty ease.

LXIII.

She sat while Juan drew near to inquire [well,"
 Her grace's health, and answered him, "quite
 And the young Don saw he'd ne'er raise a fire
 Without the feelings could be made to swell,
 He knew how much o'er-hasty words inspire
 A kind of shame e'en where the kindling fell,
 He trusted to o'ercome the lady's coldness,
 He cared not how, in anger or in boldness.

LXIV.

He asked why she had left that pleasant circle
 At Norman Abbey, e'er the rest drew off—
 Why she whose wit was brightest known to sparkle,
 Had scarcely come to look at him, so tough!
 For him who could not range the house and park all,
 To languish without company enough
 He asked, but still she sat and answered not,
 And her changed cheeks show'd ne'er a crimson spot.

LXV.

Could this be she who had not made a scruple
 To give her very name into his mouth?
 Who seemed as if she only aimed to dupe well
 The cooler soul to her voluptuous routh?
 It was—in truth the real feelings troop well
 When right well governed, from a slippery youth,
 And by the time that he had thought thus far
 He caught the dutchess's new point of war.

LXVI.

She spoke so slowly, calmly, you would doubt
 Almost that she was speaking, from her tenor,
 Save from the cold stern mockery that flowed out
 From that fair temple of her husband's honor
 As she requested, by what reasoning 'bout
 Her length of visit at Lord Henry's manor
 Became at his disposal, by what right
 He grew so confidentially polite?

LXVII.

He raised his eyes to say "the right of love,
 That had been confidential on her part,"
 But deemed it would be an unkindly move
 To probe her for her weaknesses of heart,
 Or might be an unlucky way to prove
 Her temper waited only for a start
 That could be violent, would be unpleasant,
 And might stir up to hate long and incessant.

LXVIII.

And so he dropped his eyes and sunk his voice
 To that low tone that he had used before,
 When Spain was pleasant, Donna Julia nice,
 And pleasure's residence kept open door,
 The tone a woman's heart would take for choice,
 And for the ransom her own heart restore,
 A tone that had been with him talismanic,
 And saved Haidee from a too sudden panic.

LXIX.

He almost whispered, was this the resolve
 With which he rode toward that very square?
 With a mind bent to let the wheel revolve
 And hear the dutchess from her easy chair
 Pour out invectives as a safety-valve,
 And answer them with the same injured air?
 Certainly not; his foaming fret was gone,
 And his devotion to the sex ran on.

LXX.

And so he told her in a pleasant tone
 How much the gathered company had missed her,
 And how the lady Adeline, for one,
 Regretted her departure as a sister;
 The chord was touched, and as a prude had done,
 When some free-hearted dashing fellow kissed
 her,
 Her eyes flashed once, and then the lady spoke,
 But ne'er believe her guarded line she broke.

LXXI.

I question if there is a harder line
 In all the world to draw, than such as this,
 To make deceit and earnestness combine,
 To join the serpent's wisdom with his hiss,
 And while the tissue of deceit we twine
 To let the feelings burst without a miss;
 For mark me, if you will, you'll often find
 The passionless the keenest of mankind.

LXXII.

And he who binds strong passions with strong will,
 And lets them run without betraying either—
 Is fit for any post of mortal skill,
 And need not blanch to face the bitterest weather,
 Obstacles are to such, the shades that fill
 Adventure's landscape, stopping not a feather,
 And history is full of written sooth
 To prove my proposition but the truth.

LXXIII.

The conquerors who have stood upon the world,
 Have lacked so much in this essential point,
 The passionless have kept their bosoms curled,
 Without the vigor or the strength to foin't—
 The passionate so freely have unfurled
 Their banners, as to put them out of joint,
 The strong, without heads of sufficient length,
 The wise, without the active will and strength.

LXXIV.

Try, ye who doubt it; set yourselves to rail
 Against him whom you most devoutly hate,
 Obligated to coin a false yet current tale,
 That shall be bitterness in force and weight
 But must not, shall not, slip aside your mail,
 Or give suspicion of your real state,
 If you're not cramped, I own I am no prophet,
 And my poor pen is running sadly off it.

LXXV.

How spoke the dutchess? With a bitter sneer
 (More feeling than she yet had deigned to show)
 She told the reason why she had drawn near
 The time of her expected visit, so,

'Twas little call, she said, to linger there,
 Where dissipation had such ready flow,
 Where neither decency nor common pride
 Could stay a moment that corrupted tide.

LXXVI.

She told him that the house whose hostess deigned
 To bend herself to an adventurer,
 Who night and day by his bedside remained [stir,
 And scowled and frowned at the least common
 Who took no pains to hide how much he reigned,
 Was not a fitting residence for her,
 She would not risk the stain of longer sleeping
 Beneath a roof that had no better keeping.

LXXVII.

Dear reader, was not that extremely cool
 For an offended woman? very, very!
 The dutchess played her trump cards to the full,
 As if a doubtful game had made her merry,
 Or merry mad; as if she made a tool
 Of artists whose tools would not oft miscarry;
 In fifteen minutes, if I judge how time acts,
 The lady's impudence had reached the climax.

LXXVIII.

She told him that the lady Adeline's shriek
 Gave her suspicion first, of circumstances,
 She thought such things extremely apt to speak
 In other things beside written romances,
 So she had watched my lady's tell-tale cheek,
 And paid a small attention to her glances,
 And she had seen what all the rest had seen,
 Sickness quite well put on, and very green.

LXXIX.

She told him that the heroine and hero
 Who figured so conspicuously at present,
 In certain papers, would find cooled to zero
 Friendship that might have been less evanescent,
 But names hawked in the streets, from day to year—
 au-
 —daciously, would not be extremely pleasant
 Announcements for a lady's drawing-room,
 And such would find her always not at home.

LXXX.

To be still more explicit, she was sorry,
 But must beg really to be understood
 That visiters of character were worry
 Enough, to do her health or pleasure good,
 So, to be brief, as she was in a hurry,
 She would reduce her friend's list if she could,
 And henceforth—but the bell hung at the wall,
 And she spoke as the lacquey entered hall—

LXXXI.

"Never at home to Lord Amundeville,
 The lady Adeline, or the Russian mission."
 She swept away, and as she left him, still
 Don Juan scarce could credit his position,
 But gave her credit for a giant will,
 Unmatched affrontery, and strong decision,
 Smiled, as the lacquey bowed him to the door,
 And as he whirled home, smiled some ten times
 more.

LXXXII.

Don Juan, bearer of the high commands
 Of the most mighty empress of the north,
 The "handsome stranger" from a dozen lands,
 Noble by looks, and not less so by birth,
 The "lion" with the mark yet on his hands
 And always well received by wealth and worth,
 Requested not to mind calling again,
 In language most unreasonably plain!

LXXXIII.

He had not given her all *that* upbraiding,
 Yet had received a small one in its stead,
 He felt upbraidings were extremely jading,
 And would not tell well, if a rival read,
 But owned himself the lesson he'd been reading,
 Made him still more finished and thorough-bred,
 By showing him what Spain or colder Russia,
 Could not, or otherwise would not, produce you.

LXXXIV.

Russia! ah Russia! sent him on a mission,
 And Spain, oh Spain! that had a convent in it,
 Turkey, that boasted of a black physician,
 And men in petticoats, and one worse tenet;
 But England, had a variegated dish in,
 Whose edge he had stepped on within a minute,
 And seen, what till the next canto I'll keep,
 And go, as Juan did, home and to sleep.

CANTO IV.

I.

THERE are a dozen pleasant things in life,
 But of them all, superlatively pleasant,
 Is the small talk, and the tea-table strife, [sant;
 That makes the tea hot and and the grin inces-
 When L., Shaw's widow, and Ned Barrow's wife,
 Assemble for a conclave coalescent,
 To hold discussion, over tea and muffins,
 Concerning babies, wedding cake, and coffins.

II.

How the bright spoon stirs up the sugary lumps,
 Just at the bottom of the "dish of tea,"
 And how the tongue, after some trial thumps,
 Stirs up scandal's unfathomable sea;
 What graceless hillocks and what hilly bumps
 They prove a common character to be, [thrown,
 What pleasant shades are o'er our neighbors'
 How very pleasantly they shade our own.

III.

"That proud Miss T. no better than she should be,"
 "That graceless scoundrel H., that tried to win
 her;"
 (Two nods, three winks,) "the Reverend Mr. T.,"
 "The hypocrite," (a groan,) "the shameless sin-
 "The great teetotal leader, Doctor V., [ner;"
 Got drunk as sin at the great temperance dinner;"
 "Oh what deceit," "dear me," "the Lord preserve
 us," [us.
 "You don't say so," that's just the way they serve

IV.

Who would not be immortalized in rhyme?
 Who would not live awhile in song and story?
 Who would not be dished up for coming time,
 In hues of quite unmentionable glory?
 Who would not have a foible or a crime,
 Commented on by bards and sages hoary,
 Who would not dine on lobsters (spiced), and salad,
 And have the dinner spiced up in a ballad?

V.

Who would not end his marriage by divorce?
 Who would not be remarried to his sister?
 Who would not have the calm celestial course,
 Of his pure blue, sullied with muddy bistre?

Who would not be called out and shot, or worse,
 Have his eyes spoilt by some six-foot two-fister?
 Who would not (in report), share all the blessings,
 That follow scandal and her outer dressings?

VI.

Shades of departed hero and romancer,
 The days of chivalry yet linger here,
 Instead of lyre and listening lady, answer
 As well the liar and the listening ear;
 Fame is a bawd, as well as common dancef,
 And treads, she cares not how, or when, or where,
 And the romance (that's lying, disenchanted),
 Has lingered something longer than we wanted.

VII.

And table talk and jabbering women rule
 The scope of all imaginative lore,
 Till many who are neither knave nor fool,
 Become like fools, corrupted to the core,
 Without the palliative stock of wool,
 About the brains, the venial guilt to lower;
 I blush for womankind, part of them, only,
 Whose outside samples are not scarce or lonely.

VIII.

And lips that should be rife with song and prayer,
 Lips that should never breathe aught, save affec-
 Throw out, how often, on the busy air. [tion,
 The unknown poison of the tongue's detraction;
 And fair sweet girls in the pollution share,
 Who have not shared the envy or the action;
 Of all the wrongs with which the true are battling,
 None stings so deep as what the world calls tattling.

IX.

This in this place, that would not have been here,
 But for the prompting outer manners gave me,
 And inability to bend an ear
 Of total deafness to the fools who brave me,
 With table talk and scandal; everywhere
 Where people will, or people will not, have me,
 Besides, 'tis apropos, just in this place,
 When we have listened to her fibbing grace.

X.

I mean not to set down that noble lady
 Among the troop of poisoned scandal-mongers,
 Who have a lie, without occasion, ready,
 To feed an appetite that always hungers;
 My lady had an end, at least, to study
 To save, at others' cost, her ears and fingers;
 How well she did so, we shall see anon,
 And soonest, in her case, by following on.

XI.

And briefly—her career upon these pages
 Has run itself to close—and so we end her;
 The natural consequence of cooling stages
 (The very cold after the very tender),
 Had done more than the wisdom of past ages,
 To still her grace's passions, and to mend her,
 And those few random days at Norman Abbey,
 Saved and cleared up a name already shabby.

XII.

She had gone farther into dissipation,
 Or more imprudently at least, than ever,
 And giving way to such a heady passion,
 For every random arrow from love's quiver,
 Opened her feelings to a calculation
 Of consequences that might chance to sever
 Her name and person from the titled rank,
 That opened to her ball and rout and bank!

XIII.

"Who has drunk wine?" say all; I have, for one,
 And afterward drunk bitterness to pay it;
 When sober, with reflection left alone
 (Parentthese—'tis the fashion now to say it),
 A kind of flying dance throughout has run,
 With all the devils from Hades to play it;
 The misery that seemed so close a rubber
 Was, that I grew unreasonably sober!

XIV.

The dutchess had been slightly flushed with wine,
 That, flowing from the heart, the world calls love,
 And when reaction left her, this divine
 Liquid, turned over by an awkward shove,
 She stored more precepts up, just line by line,
 Than we might make a second Lacon of;
 And all applied—the part most strictly useful—
 In any language not too much abuseful.

XV.

And she had put her maxims into use,
 And grown extremely moral and prudential,
 And if on others she had heaped abuse
 In her defence, I think 'tis not essential—
 It only proves that robes hung very loose
 May be drawn tight and held as reverential;
 For, till the last, she kept extremely square
 By the old duke, his gout, and easy-chair.

XVI.

But we have others who demand of us
 The duties of the follower and leader:
 The latter, he who bores you to discuss
 This long array—the former, the bored reader—
 In a concoction of condemned rebus,
 Bad rhyme and mawkish sentiment, a feeder
 Of all things to all men—milk, pap, and gruel,
 Beefsteak and cutlets, in life's stages dual.

XVII.

A morning call had Juan's breakfast settled,
 And left Don Juan very much at leisure,
 Sufficiently ill-natured and high mettled
 For any kind of dashing, stirring pleasure;
 And into Blank-Blank square his carriage rattled,
 With his mind just resolving in a measure
 That things might go as easily and well,
 To see him, off-hand, settled at hotel.

XVIII.

His lingering at Lord Henry's might give color
 To circumstances well enough reported,
 Believing him, as all did, an apt scholar
 At any school where frolic-life was sported—
 Believing that he would not wear one's collar,
 When by a dozen others sought and courted;
 Unless some favors, "secret, sweet, and precious,"
 Gave him a cause for lingering, rather specious.

XIX.

The servant said his lordship was within,
 And in his library, he thought, inditing
 Letters and speeches (articles akin);
 Certain his lordship was within, and writing;
 And, as his habit with his friends had been,
 Entered the library without inviting,
 And saw, with a knit brow and sterner cheek,
 The very man with whom he came to speak.

XX.

There lay a heap of papers on the table—
 Foolscap, Bath, post, gilt-edge, and printed sheet,
 In such confusion as if London's rabble
 Had tossed them out for playthings in the street;

And struggling to the top, as they were able,
 Lay two newspapers he had chanced to meet,
 That seemed to look, although they bore no mark,
 Like shots at Battersea, an hour from dark.

XXI.

And sitting, leaning with his hand on one,
 Was Henry, Lord Amundeville, the host
 Of his intrusive visiter, alone
 At midnight—he might well have seemed a ghost
 (Save for broadcloth and boots, that, as I've known,
 Are not adopted by the spirits most):
 The spirit's paleness had beseeemed him well,
 And ne'er face hardened more by spirit's spell.

XXII.

That face (throw out the eyes) was frozen life,
 Not stone, nor marble, but expression-chilled,
 As if strong passions, haughtily at strife,
 Had been crushed moveless as their master will'd,
 And apathy, with its destroying knife,
 Had been, like its opponents, thrown and killed;
 The eyes were wild, yet stern and very cold,
 Such as, we feel, have bitter thoughts to hold.

XXIII.

He rose as Juan stepped two paces in, [him,
 And strode across, and turned and stood before
 As some one says, I scarce know how or when,
 "His mother had not known him though she bore
 It was so plain that passion, if not sin, [him;"]
 Had swept a wing of change and shadow o'er him,
 He was awake—to the heart's strength awake—
 And sleep had broken, as the jealous break!

XXIV.

A night may change a man: one night has set
 Wrinkles upon my brow none may efface.
 Tush! it was folly—but the pillow wet
 With my hot tears that night, has been my grace,
 And by it I have learned that some I met,
 Though angels, were not worth exclusive place
 In a heart made for wearing cheerfully
 The mixed affections of humanity.

XXV.

A night had made Amundeville less worldly,
 Less parliamentary, and far more vital; [ed, he
 Had shown him that although he dressed and whirl-
 Had not given up himself to love's requital;
 But with a woman's heart half round him curled, he
 Had left that woman's heart alone to fight all
 That fashionable foppery and science
 Might bring to bid virtue and truth defiance.

XXVI.

He doubted not the Lady Adeline's virtue,
 But he believed her heart had fled from him,
 And though Platonics do not always hurt you,
 They will sometimes make reputation dim:
 And such he thought the very moral dirt, you
 Have seen thrown on her in the poet's whim—
 He knew the tale a bitter lie in part,
 But questioned whether it had not a start!

XXVII.

It humbled him to think another's face
 Could call up warmer feelings than his own;
 It humbled him to think he could not trace
 A symptom, when to others it was known;
 It humbled him to think his roof a place
 Where wrong emotions should be earliest grown;
 It humbled him, but such humility
 Is pride—the bitterest we shall ever see.

XXVIII.

"Love in distrust" of Lady Adeline,
And scorn for Juan, needed but a spark
To set in action that terrific mine,
And crush his household idols in the dark !
One sneer from Juan, one suspicious sign
From his fair lady, would have done the work,
And left death-struggles and the crimson flood
To witness of a tale of guilt and blood !

XXIX.

They never came ! Two moments, as they stood
Fronting each other, sent a stream of thought,
Rich with ideas of forgotten good, [brought
Through Juan's mind : he saw how they had
That proud patrician to a dangerous mood ;
To right again the wrong he had *not* wrought,
He deemed, as we should do it, meritorious,
Generous, and philosophically glorious.

XXX.

"Charity hides a multitude of sins,"
And peccadilloes also : one good act
That we are not compelled to do, begins
A credit side with heaven, to connect
Our wavering spirits with celestial scenes
That claim but small affinity, in fact ;
How much Juan's next deed deserves of praise,
Will be correctly judged by coming days.

XXXI.

He seldom grew so very much in earnest,
And so shone out the brighter when he did—
(So, diamond ! in the mine thou ever burnest
The brighter, that thou art for ever hid ;
So, Virtue ! when to light thou once returnest,
A hidden gem, thou hast such prices bid).
I think, sincerely, Juan meant as well
As he succeeded, in the tale I tell.

XXXII.

And neither spoke a word : Juan advanced
In silence to the table, and took up
The offensive papers—just a moment glanced
To see the lying paragraphs at top—
And while his pulse with the excitement danced,
Tore off a hundred notices of shop,
Hotel, and villa, leaving just the column,
In each, that made that noble lord so solemn—

XXXIII.

Drew near a sheet, took up a pen and wrote :—
"The Lord Amundeville will credit me
When I swear by the arms that gild my coat,
By my own honor, and the God we see,
That every word upon these lines afloat
Is a base, false, and lying calumny—
That not a word of love has ever past,
From the first moment's meeting to the last,

XXXIV.

Between the Lady Adeline his wife,
And me his guest." He signed it with his name,
Took up the sand-box and the folding-knife,
Sanded and cut it, made it just the same
In size as fitted to the very life
The paragraphs—again refitted them,
Sealed them all fast in one, rose from the stand,
And put the papers in Lord Henry's hand.

XXXV.

A shadow of distrust—a shadow only—
Flitted across his face ; his brow relaxed,
The confidence so generous and manly,
That, given in honor, never should be taxed,

Went to his soul (hot Wise and hotter Stanley
Might learn from them in having honor waxed),
And the hand Juan offered to his clasp
Was seized with an almost convulsive grasp.

XXXVI.

Poh !—explanations are extremely dull
To all except the parties interested—
Even a romance sifted to the full,
With its hair-breadth escapes and marvels tested,
Is the worst part of reading—we can cull
No more of dangers past or troubles breasted ;
I hate to close a volume, and I hate
To keep up things unreasonably straight.

XXXVII.

So Juan just explained, and bowed, and left him
A happier, oh ! how much a happier man !
Humbler, as man should be, when passions sift him,
And wiser in affection's general plan :
Twelve hours of jealousy had only left him
Of coldness that all life had been his ban,
Without which he had shared less state employment,
And more of woman's love and pure enjoyment.

XXXVIII.

There—I have changed him ! I have long ago
Seen that a change is possible in all—
Seen that the highest spring up from the low—
Seen that the highest to the low may fall—
Seen that romantic men cold-hearted grow,
And stern men own the sympathetic thrall—
That high and low, and rich and poor, change places
In one short hour and in a thousand cases.

XXXIX.

Poor Praed says, "Mill was used to blacken eyes
At Harrow Hill, without the fear of sessions ;"
And strait "Charles Medler loathed false quantities
As freely as he hated false professions."
"But Mill sat down, unmerciful and wise,
A magistrate to punish all transgressions ;
And Medler's feet, all out of square, and antic,
Lie down, two hundred yards in the Atlantic."

XL.

I had a tutor once (the parallel)
Who showed the muses, and bade me embrace :
I've followed them, "not wisely, but too well,"
While he has thrown their favors in their face ;
I mind me that I often used to tell
He held all womankind in steady chase :
And now with one he sits right well contented,
While I am sorry woman's number's stinted !

XLI.

I used to chide him for his wrinkled brow,
And he retaliated by complaining
That I laughed always, late or early. Now
There are few smiles upon my brow remaining :
They come, but seldom linger ; Wit's below—
Thanks to a year or two of thorough training—
And he makes merry, not with mine alone,
But all the world's misfortunes, and his own !

XLII.

I preached him sermons, just to mend his habits :
To make him leave his club and his segars—
To give up Sandy Welsh's and Welsh rabbits,
And drop the cards he us'd at P——'s and R——'s.
The epicure makes up my weekly debits,
My best Havana sparkles like the stars,
And my kind tutor lectures me to leave
The cards he cast away last new-year's eve !

XLIII.

That night, when evening closed upon the city,
 That night when evening's dusky hues crept o'er,
 When dim and indistinct, the angle jetty,
 The figured railing, and the massive door,
 Threw dark shades on a picture never pretty,
 But such as England's heart for Dickens wore,
 When lamps were not yet lighted, and the din
 Of the eternal day was closing in—

XLIV.

Within a very, very little room,
 Scarce dreamed of, in that tall and massive pile,
 Where an intruding foot might ne'er presume
 To enter, with the prying leer and smile,
 A lady's private room, till day of doom
 Sacred from bustle, business, and toil—
 Sat Lady Adeline, I scarce know where,
 But think, most probably, upon a chair,

XLV.

It might be sofa, or a curtained couch,
 I know not what such rooms contain in common,
 Then how in conscience' name can I avouch
 The very sanctum that a titled woman
 Kept for security against approach,
 And made the only home about a home, in ?
 But truth she sat there, with her two white hands
 Veiling her forehead and its glittering bands:

XLVI.

And very, very wretched; what to her
 Was the world's whisper? nothing! but her own?
 Had she not played the heedless worshipper
 Before the stranger, at the stranger's throne?
 Had she not given a shadowy thought, to mar
 The pure clear whiteness of her wedded zone?
 It is my firm belief that she had not,
 And that her love for Juan bore no spot.

XLVII.

Had she loved willingly? Not she, not she!
 Had she loved rashly? scarce a doubt of it!
 While the world holds its sacred mockery,
 And at one flame, has but one taper lit,
 While the full bosom is constrained to be
 For all except one selfish love unfit—
 She had loved rashly—yet loved with a flame
 That fifty years would never blow to shame.

XLVIII.

And she accused, defended her own heart
 Before the free tribunal of her mind,
 Gave, as she deemed, its most deep-hidden part
 To the investure, keeping naught behind,
 Saw nothing that could cause a blush to start
 For thought or speech, unfaithful or unkind,
 Yet, all alone, covered a queenlike face
 As if she hid it from a world's disgrace.

XLIX.

One thing she knew, that could her own broad lands
 Ay, every foot, roll back that bitter slander,
 Next morn would see them in a stranger's hands;
 One thing she felt, that she could calmly bend her
 Beside her husband's feet, at his command
 A year, to know that, whether stern or tender,
 He held her spotless, as a husband should
 A wedded wife of her untarnished blood.

L.

But this she dared not dream of, cold rebuke
 And bitter sneers, and taunting finger-points,
 That she must school herself to bear and brook
 With a proud silence answering to his taunts,

Were the least ills she hoped for—and the look
 The wretched bear, when their cold tyrant vaunts:
 Was half-prepared to meet her husband's brow,
 That little needed such a greeting now.

LI.

'Twas growing darker still, and still she sat
 Still silent, and her face still buried so,
 Why rung she not for lamps, light, and all that?
 Because the darkness really seemed to grow
 Like a dear friend around her; I regret
 I can not, for the darkness, pause and throw
 Upon this page an attitude, an arm,
 A forehead, and a really splendid form.

LII.

A step without—ha! was it true indeed
 That Henry Lord Amundeville could not wait
 Even her privacy, but came to feed
 His taunting appetite, to jibe and bait
 A wedded woman at her sorest need?
 Was this the man whom other men called great?
 And in the lady's bosom rose a tide,
 A bitter current of contemptuous pride.

LIII.

Opened, the door; it was too dusk to see
 Aught save the outline of the coming figure,
 But well she knew no other it could be
 Than her cold heartless husband in his rigor,
 And as it closed again, with energy,
 Her loosened nerves grew back to life and vigor,
 And she sprang up, and stood with folded arms
 At bay, a very queen in her alarms.

LIV.

Spirit of wonder! did she hear aright?
 'He spoke her name in tones of tenderness,
 Drew her toward his bosom with a slight
 Yet kindly pressure, that most rich caress,
 And pressed his lips to hers, as if the light
 From her dark eyes, could look upon the kiss—
 Tones, tones of kindness, his arms closed above her,
 And the changed husband was a second lover.

LV.

I have bent o'er a story Willis tells
 Of crumbling Venice, and her gondolier,
 And he will pardon what his name recalls,
 If I shall weave it in my numbers here—
 How a fair girl fled from her father's halls
 Across the Brenta, with a filial tear;
 The fair Francesca by a stranger's side,
 Giving up all to be the stranger's bride.

LVI.

Time passed, Paletto's bride, Paletto's form,
 Were things of wonder to the titled crowd
 Who knew not from what line his stalwart arm,
 His lavish coffers and his palace flowed,
 They only knew Paletto's blood was warm,
 Ay, even rash, that heedlessly he trode
 The halls of men who knew him not, yet pressed
 The strange dark noble as a titled guest.

LVII.

And then Francesca waited, and he came
 Late home one night, and flushed with revel wine,
 And bade her quit that darkened hall for shame,
 And go with him, and see the white moonshine
 Out on the Adriatic, where the flame
 Of that pure orb, lay on the white sea-line,
 And took her in a fisher's boat, and sung
 Rude lays of love in a wild careless tongue,

LVIII.

And told her he was born a fisherman,
 And won his palace by a single throw;
 That he had lost that stately pile again,
 And was again a boatman, poor and low,
 That if she languished for the titled train
 And scorned his birth, there yet was time to go;
 And then she left him, shared a titled lot,
 But kept her first love by her, unforgot.

LIX.

And then one night the silver moon was set
 High up in heaven, looking from her door
 To see the dark-eyed woman, tired of state,
 Who came back to the fisherman once more,
 And bade him fold her to his bosom yet,
 And take her as into her heart's red core;
 The moon looked still, and saw their vows new-
 Paletto and his lost love reunited. [plighted,

LX.

'Tis an old story, and a touching one,
 And here should be thought over, when the cold
 And proud Lord Henry from his pride bent down,
 And breathed words tenderer than those of old,
 Where, in that room, together and alone,
 Love listened well, and innocence grew bold,
 And Adeline felt a new life revealing,
 And a new hope in a past union sealing.

LXI.

She told him of the love, the only love
 That she had laid upon the stranger's shrine,
 The sorrow that the springing heart should move—
 For a work made by God so near divine,
 But warped and weaned, the serpent from the dove,
 The cross of passion from the holy sign;
 I hope, I trust, she drew the line aright
 And gave the word, as fancy drew the sight.

LXII.

He spoke of Juan's nobleness, a proof
 That he was jealous of the youth no longer,
 For jealous men seldom speak in behoof
 Of those they deem the swifter or the stronger,
 And, serve them right! what spiritual oaf
 Would praise the man who filled up his own hun-
 His pockets, or his trunk, at his expense? [ger,
 None, by the rood, who owned a spark of sense.

LXIII.

I fancied once (no matter how or when),
 That rivalry in woman need not breed
 Dislike between the rivals, as two men—
 That two might battle fairly for the meed,
 Each of the other speak fair words, and then
 Speak better of himself, the best at need; [lets,
 While I popped words, my kindly friend popped bul-
 Each wrapped with my own random squibs to dull
 it's

LXIV.

Excessive speed. I've written kindly letters,
 Swallowed his praises like Peruvian bark,
 Worn really, though one-sided, friendship's fetters,
 And praised him back again (God save the mark!)
 And he has spit fire like fifteen fire-eaters,
 And sent one letter that the devil's clerk
 Might read and might not, for to my own reading,
 'Twas as ungenerous as the author's breeding.

LXV.

Man grinds his heel upon the head of him
 Who stops him in his passion or his path,
 Man wrenches from its parent trunk, the limb
 That happens to have moved his jealous wrath,

But man has never found aught like the slime
 Of the little serpent creeping in the math,
 The serpent tongue to do his froward will,
 And plant a heaven, or eke out a hell.

LXVI.

Tush! I grow bitter; pause, I mind me well
 A piece of good advice an old friend gave me,
 Always to pause when the first feelings swell,
 And never let the first rash deeds enslave me;
 I do not always heed what old friends tell,
 But when I do, some bitter thoughts they save me,
 I've found the maxim good in quick inditing,
 I'll mind it now, and stop while passion's writing.

LXVII.

"Stand every tub on its own proper bottom,"
 Shall be the motto, hence, in love or war,
 Who struck the heaviest buffets, or who got them,
 Matters no more than what we battle for,
 Who shall out-general, or who out-plot them,
 Who shall conceal the best the hidden scar,
 Who shall be gayest in the field of folly,
 Who throw most stones at doting melancholy!

LXVIII.

Suffice it, Juan's baggage still remained
 At Blank Blank square, and still he was their
 Agreeably and nobly entertained [guest,
 In letters and in food, on England's best,
 Until he found one morning he had planned
 To take a trip to Cumberland, in quest
 Of just what London wanted, one fair face
 To make it an intensely pleasant place.

LXIX.

For some slight reason, like all reasons hidden,
 For lack of something else to think about,
 Aurora's image had come up unbidden
 Some fourteen times a day, and put to rout
 The charms of two blue-stockings and a red one,
 Who fished him as we fish reluctant trout,
 And shut out from his view two opera-dancers,
 Whose plain love-tokens really needed answers.

LXX.

Were I a tourist, I should take occasion
 To speak a while of Lake Winandemere,
 And stop some half a canto to emblazon
 The autumn scenery round Wietonshire,
 Speak, as the poets speak, about the ways in
 Which fine old Cumberland meets falling year,
 But as I'm not, excuse me, at the present,
 Touring's too much bored out to be right pleasant.

LXXI.

A scene in England might do, but a sketch
 Drawn from reality, must come fourth-handed,
 For verily there's not a hedge or ditch
 But bears the mark where some mad tourist
 And any noddy, with the tact to stretch, [landed,
 Commands the readers' talent once commanded,
 The world's gone wild on travels, and of course
 We all assist the new-found hobby-horse.

LXXII.

A well-filled book, drawn by a man of mind
 From such material as he seeks alone,
 The world of letters should be glad to find,
 And men of genius should be glad to own;
 We've no objection for a while to wind
 Among fallen column or deserted stone
 With Stephens and with Gliddon, and a few
 Who have been witty, vigorous, or new.

LXXIII.

But to be bored by the confounded squad
Of brainless coxcombs, who in six weeks' travel
Skip over all creation—fly like mad,
East, west, north, south, by mountain or by level,
Three days from Paris to Jellalabad,
Three weeks from Mount Parnassus to the devil—
Spare us, kind Heaven! we can't spare ourselves,
For books of some kind *must* fill up our shelves!

LXXIV.

A dunce at home will be a dunce abroad;
Just so a blockhead or an egotist:
The man who can not find the common road
Of every-day life with reflection blest,
Will stand on Marathon a senseless clod,
And Petra's silence shall not thrill his breast;
And though the past to him makes dulness bright,
Think as he will, we beg him not to write!

LXXV.

I've written these last stanzas with a view
Of sending the young Don to Cumberland—
But happening to turn a page or two
Back, on some hasty notes that I had penned,
I find that history will not bear me through
In this excursion that my fancy planned,
And that Don Juan's stay in England grew
Brief as the hasty notes I hurried through.

LXXVI.

A feather turns the scale of destiny,
And a caprice makes happiness or mars it;
When we have planned a purpose eagerly,
A little change in time or nature bars it;
And could we trace the consequences, we
Might give by trifles even beyond the stars: it
Might make us tremble at the smallest action,
And shudder at the slightest recollection!

LXXVII.

Had such a thing been done, then such a thing
Had followed, as a natural consequence!
And it would take ten years of life to sing
A tithe of what is far beyond pretence
Of how much change in life of priest or king,
Bard, poet, statesman, mendicant, or prince,
One little point had made, possessing weight
Enough almost to turn the scale of fate.

LXXVIII.

A blow well struck has turned a battle's tide,
A hasty word has set a land in flame,
A falling horse has crushed a nation's pride,
A broken girth revealed a monarch's shame;
A spark has spread red ruin far and wide,
And e'en in Moscow sealed Napoleon's claim;
A hasty word has given a maiden's breast
To an eternal and an aching guest.

LXXIX.

And so, reverse it—how, for good or ill,
The witchery of Juan's winning art
Among old Cumberland's lake, vale, and hill,
Had played within Aurora Raby's heart
When once they met again, must slumber still,
Till buried knowledge into life shall start:
They never met—at least so says the record,
Although 'tis possible, as life is chequered.

LXXX.

What broke the Don's arrangement? Just an order
From the most high and mighty Catherine
To the Don Juan, her puissant warder,
To give up to the trustiest of men—

The count of Strogkanoff, a good old sworder—
What private papers might be with him then,
And to repair to her imperial court once,
On business of most wonderful importance!

LXXXI.

There was a hint about a post of honor
Still greater than the one he occupied:
The services the noble Don had done her,
So great, that nothing could be well denied!
And then the count, a second Eath O'Connor,
Bowed in his ministerial power and pride,
And hoped the noble Don would think it best
To heed the most imperial behest.

LXXXII.

Don Juan took the liberty to ask
If her imperial majesty was pleased
With the fulfilment of his present task:
And here the count of Strogkanoff just gazed
A moment (he had only dropped his mask),
And smiled to see the Don's suspicion eased,
And then assured him the said royal woman
Thought his diplomacy much more than common.

LXXXIII.

It may be that our times are more suspicious
Than Catherine's were, but this much is most cer-
Displaced ambassadors are quite officious [tain,
To see the motive that's behind the curtain;
And their grimace at losing all *those* fishes
Grow, to the lookers-on, very diverting;
'Tis their belief, although new favors fetter him,
When they remove a man, they never better him.

LXXXIV.

A man with more suspicion or less bravery
Than Juan owned, would have, no doubt, sus-
Some specimen of her imperial knavery— [pected
The knout, Siberia, or some place connected,
Especially, like Juan, if her favor he
Amid his love-scenes had almost neglected:
But Juan, faith! I think, suspected not,
Or if he did suspect, despised the plot.

LXXXV.

What ho! for Russia once again!—To leave,
Crossed Juan merely that it stopped a *liason*
Or something that might be one, on the eve
Of an attempt upon Aurora's freezing;
And our sweet Leila had no heart to grieve—
And as she left no tears, saw little reason.
One, and only one, took the parting dearly,
And Lady Pinchback felt the loss severely.

LXXXVI.

Leila she loved, just as she would have loved
A piece of statuary that she saw
Would leave a vacant corner if removed,
And if left still, continue her *éclat*;
My lady knew how soon she would have proved
A magnet London's fame and wealth to draw:
My lady, with a pure regard for self,
Was puzzled how to fill her vacant shelf.

LXXXVII.

Commend me to the selfish; let them make
A world of talk about self-sacrificing:
The quantity of pains the selfish take
To be "extremely sorry," is surprising!
For interest you will find two hearts that break,
While one breaks for pure sorrow in its rising;
The truth, indeed, may make a pretty strife,
But mockery acts "more natural than life!"

LXXXVIII.

Pure-hearted Leila! she began to think

That sham was really earnest, but the choice

That Juan gave her, of his cup to drink

Or learn in giddy London to rejoice,

Was eloquently answered, by the link

Of her fair arm in his, and by the voice

That told him of the young heart's gratitude,

And the small tear that trembled where it stood.

LXXXIX.

A short farewell to Lord Amundeville—

A wish of kindness for his happy wife!

If the dim future had a store of ill

For them, it has escaped my searching knife.

With all of England I have wrought my will,

And leave it—then, as now, for ever rife

With good and evil, mixed so long and well,

That which predominates no one can tell!

XC.

What ho! for Russia once again!—The two

Stood on the deck and swept from England's coast;

But deem not with her hills and headlands blue

Our watch upon their coming life is lost:

Years may make life and tale together new,

Before I claim again my pleasant post;

But I have hoped that he whom I attend,

Will own my moral maxims to the end.

CANTO V.

I.

Out of an occupation—poor Othello!

I do not wonder he was growing tired;

Though his complexion might be rather yellow,

And by his jealous thoughts too quickly fired,

His one remark proves him a clever fellow,

That any one of us might have admired;

He knew our nature so extremely well,

And grew so very tired of sitting still.

II.

Othello's occupation's gone—so's mine,

Or rather was, for I've begun again;

I've grown so used to tracing line by line

The cogitations of my quibbling brain,

That though I promised something very fine

And new when I should recommence the strain,

I find myself, within a month, beginning

Anew my old career of rhyme and sinning.

III.

I had a friend who quit tobacco-chewing

For several reasons—one, outrageous breath,

That gave unpleasant savor to his wooing,

Besides expectorating half to death!

And as a marriage-settlement was brewing,

He took a lease beforehand on the faith,

And clipped his quid; but, fiery as a rocket,

He carried "Mrs. Miller's" in his pocket—

IV.

To show his resolution: let me beg

That you will never undertake bravado!

I never knew a man, fast in the leg,

That is, who wouldn't fight you unless made to—

But he would swear he wouldn't move a peg

For all creation, even if he had to!

Cowards will bluster: no one need to break spear

On such an issue—for your proof take Shakspeare.

V.

And courage, much exposed, evaporates

In something much like anger at ill use;

'Tis like good-nature, for the thirteen states

Don't let your freedom run into abuse;

Or ten to one, before your wrath abates,

The screw of resolution will be loose—

And wit and valor, as you know each tends,

Oozing, like Falstaff's, at your finger-ends!

VI.

I meant to show temptation as it is

By mentioning that my aforesaid friend,

Finding his stimulus so much amiss,

And having such a cure so near at hand,

Mechanically (oh, forbidden bliss!)

Grasped the forbidden weed, and in the end

Found himself (in the loafer's parlance) going it,

And used up half a paper without knowing it!

VII.

I do not chew tobacco, but I chew

The cud of my own fancies, sweet and bitter;

The habit that in olden moments grew

Of making every thought turn to a letter,

Has tempted me, half willing, to renew

My disposition passing time to fetter—

With fragile links formed out of foolscap paper,

And welded here beside the midnight taper.

VIII.

The yearning fever that allures us back

To our old habits, thoughts, and dispositions,

Has been commented on in white and black

By starving poets of all thin conditions;

And as I follow in their general track

Of poor concealments and as poor admissions,

I will confess the text from which I'm preaching

Is drawn, in thankfulness, from others' teaching.

IX.

Sweet L. E. L. has shown the love she bore

Her labor, in the Golden Violet,

And Doctor Lever smoothed Jack Hinton o'er

With something fine, on finishing regret;

The more 'tis used, the newer—so the score

Shall have my maxim, newly vamped and set—

When feeling much, as author or as reader,

We grow to like a heroine, and need her.

X.

I do not envy either of the two

Who does not feel an interest in the work;

He may peruse or write it, it is true,

But either case betrays the merchant's clerk—

Extremely calculating, cold, and blue;

And just as soon I'd see the sheriff lurk

About my person, haunting me for crimes,

As these insensibles about my rhymes.

XI.

The author beats the reader one degree—

The reader always thinks the author lies;

But trust me, that same author, though he see

At first with others' calculating eyes,

Begins at last to find reality

In every phantom that he bids arise.

Juan, with me, though an adopted child,

Is dear, and I should hate to have him spoiled!

XII.

Nothing from nothing.—Providence receives
 The meed of adoration for his power
 Of joining past and present by the eves,
 And forming from blank space the present hour;
 The poet's clan, by me, their spokesman, grieves
 That no one chooses to commemorate our
 Talent of dishing up the rarest victuals
 From pots with nothing in, and empty kettles.

XIII.

Not that our brains are naturally empty,
 But used up by long labor ill-rewarded,
 With burning brows beneath long hair unkempt, ay,
 Our very warnings ever disregarded,
 No wonder that we leave our dreams undreamt, ay,
 And find ourselves by sober sense retarded,
 No wonder that we grow the world's buffoons,
 And ape old rhymes, on purpose for baboons.

XIV.

In self-defence, we are compelled to take
 This stanza, or some other quite as poor,
 And kick the world of folly, twice a-week
 Handsomely through their own infernal door;
 The toes and boot-material we break,
 Are charged as usual, to the loser's score,
 And if we show up their forbidden evils,
 We are consoled by being called "poor devils."

XV.

The poet's rhymes are foolish, that I grant,
 But do not blame the hungry elf who writes:
 Stubborn necessity and pinching want
 May but inspire the nonsense he indites,
 And as they meet his glorious thoughts with cant,
 And call his beautiful creations frights,
 He does not trouble them with these commodities,
 But in their place flings out but vulgar oddities.

XVI.

This is the second time I have begun
 To make excuses for this half and half
 Style of composing that is neither one
 Nor yet the other, far too sad to laugh,
 Too flighty for an intellectual tone,
 A kind of melodramatic giraffe,
 Half camel and half leopard, marked and chequered,
 And serving all creation for a record.

XVII.

Faugh! I have grown too flippant, I shall finish
 The catalogue of what these pages hold—
 When this eternal headache shall diminish,
 (Last night, dear reader, I had taken cold,
 At present, I am feverish and spleenish,
 And feel as if one night had made me old)—
 There is another cause why I resume
 This written record of sunshine and gloom.

XVIII.

It is not all that I have grown to love
 The labor I have chosen for my text;
 Our dearest friends, half careless as we prove,
 Will find us with our spirits soured and vexed,
 The languid pulse, little disposed to move
 From one half stanza to begin the next,
 Yet feeling, with a feeling most acute,
 We have no right to seat us and be mute.

XIX.

It matters not if we have made the choice,
 Or Providence has set us to our fate,
 Within us there is an eternal voice
 That calls us to be evil, good, or great,

And we spring up unto our stormy joys

With brow unbended and with look elate,
 When there is little pleasant thought within us,
 From our own idle luxury to win us.

XX.

We know that we are burdened with a trust
 That, either good or ill, must be fulfilled,
 That we are wrong to lay us in the dust,
 Not having done as the great Master willed;
 And that though burning teardrops from the rust
 Of our corroding spirits be distilled,
 Without demanding how or asking why,
 We must spin out our spider-thread, and die.

XXI.

And this is fatalism—well, no matter,
 I will not stop to read the lesson through,
 The dissertation would be little better
 Than stale philosophy to you, and you,
 And I should trace a theory to the letter,
 That no man fully ever dreamed or knew,
 I only know, that useless, if you will,
 It is *my* fate to scribble nonsense still.

XXII.

It is my fate to pour unto the crowd
 The hidden heaviness of my own words,
 Stilled by rebukings if they are not loud,
 And mingled ever with my spirit chords,
 The veil of silence seems to me a shroud,
 And 'tis the only prospect time affords
 Of being heard beyond my weary cell—
 To pour my language freely, if not well.

XXIII.

And if I speak, who will bend down to listen?
 Answer, Kirk White! with that despairing moan
 That makes our eyes so with our teardrops glisten,
 When o'er us creeps the cold chill "all alone;"
 Answer, and tell us that our death-hours hasten
 Silent, and unremembered, and unknown,
 That we shall die, not one sad vestige leaving,
 And London's busy world our dust receiving;

XXIV.

Answer, and I will struggle to refute
 This plaintive fear, and say that thus to sink
 With weak and puling cry, stilled, if not mute,
 Before the flesh forsakes us, is to shrink
 And leave the slaves, unhidden, to pollute
 The fountain where a thirsting world might drink,
 To die before our time, die when we live,
 And do our calling wrong, we ne'er forgive.

XXV.

I have no bar to silence me, but death,
 I fear no other sceptre, tell me wield
 This pointed truncheon, till a wintry wreath
 Decks my thinned brows upon an aged field,
 And I will leave the barking curs beneath,
 To lap the heart-drops calmer spirits yield!
 Naught but an eagle plunges to my feast!
 (A buzzard, courteous reader, at the least.)

XXVI.

The world will live, I think, and I will not;
 I look at fatalism, and feel merry,
 I think the stars have told me my own lot—
 To die with unthinned locks, and early, very;
 Not caring, just now, for my burial-spot,
 And having supped last night on lips of cherry,
 I merely state a moderate opinion,
 That death o'er me claims early his dominion.

XXVII.

Although sometimes I feel inclined to grumble
 At this too well-authenticated fact,
 That is when sadness makes me low and humble,
 And my heart-strings are loosened, if not cracked,
 When feeling well, I look upon the tumble
 As a quick end to an unpleasant act;
 The end perhaps some ten times as unpleasant,
 For all that I can see of it at present.

XXVIII.

But when I die, my day of work is over,
 And this congenial task, besides my "journal
 Of gay Fred Finneſter, the general lover,
 Kept in his own hand-writing, and diurnal,"
 Must be completed, I must not be slow, for
 Digressions in these places are eternal,
 And I must let my rhyming vein run freely
 To catch Don Juan and the fair young Leila.

XXIX.

Catherine of Russia should have been a man,
 But as she was not, 'twas the world's look out,
 I more than half think nature lost her plan,
 And formed her in uncertainty and doubt—
 We wonder, with the best success we can,
 What the sage empress thought herself about,
 And wonder more, that some fine winter morning
 She did not lose her throne, by way of warning!

XXX.

The great she-lions of the ancient time
 Were upheld in their course by chivalry,
 Born among men who stickled at no crime,
 So that the court of beauty held them free—
 Who looked on government as one great mime,
 Whose naked truth *they* had a right to see;
 And law and order as a kind of trust
 Quite secondary to a courtier's lust.

XXXI.

This is a bitter truth, but who shall dare
 To contradict me? what had woman's power
 To answer to a ravaged nation's prayer
 In any bygone Cleopatra's hour?
 Merely that men had fixed the standard there;
 A queen's name, like a king's, is not a tower,
 And weak and vacillating, they yet laid them
 Trusts, that in half the group have not betrayed
 them.

XXXII.

Against the beautiful decree of God—
 Throned females have been cruel and obscene,
 Almost invariably; the mighty rod
 Of throned dominion—seemed to break the screen
 Of female delicacy at a nod,
 And cruel or unchaste as they have been,
 What, save man's chivalry, has held the wand
 So sacredly within her wavering hand?

XXXIII.

I meant to say, that, owning all this true,
 And that men would be fooled by sovereigns'
 I, like the world around me never knew [beauty,
 How the czarina claimed her subjects' duty,
 If any man does, let him write a new
 And clearer history; I will share his booty;
 Always provided he will "try to try"
 Not to make history so confounded dry.

XXXIV.

And let him tell me, how without a claim
 To female delicacy, female pride,
 Or female beauty—she could aptly tame
 A nation so to northern bears allied

As unromantic Russia, where the same

Iced nature rules the heart's blood and the tide,
 Where the dog-star has never flashed his evil ray,
 And no one ever dreamed of finding chivalry.

XXXV.

Juan had been a plaything; so had been
 A hundred older if not wiser heads,
 And that malicious devil that was seen
 In the great aggregate of Catherine's deeds—
 Gave her the disposition to retain
 Her cast-off favorites, in her power, at needs,
 But letting them play off, after the manner
 Of pussy with a mouse, if you will scan her.

XXXVI.

Juan had been a favorite, and she
 Had just discovered an important fact,
 That giving favorites too much liberty
 Was not the way to teach them how to act;
 The knout, the dungeon, and Siberia,
 Made up what other thoughts the empress lacked,
 The iron rod of power, was assumed,
 And Juan, lest he should do mischief, doomed.

XXXVII.

I have admired the good old woman's way
 Of flogging her six children every morn,
 To keep them out of mischief for the day; [turn,
 She owned that they did scream, and twist, and
 While her maternal switch was kept in play,
 But stiller children never had been born
 Than hers—till the next morning's flogging-time,
 When they were warned, as usual against crime.

XXXVIII.

"An ounce of good prevention's worth a pound
 Of cure," I think the ancient proverb runs,
 Our aged friend had heard it in its round,
 And practised it on her obedient sons;
 She used a switch, the world of higher sound
 Use chains and bars and gibbets, swords and guns,
 To do the same good thing, keep innocence still,
 For fear it should unhappily do ill.

XXXIX.

Young men are boasters, most especially
 Of beauty's favors; Juan might be so;
 Beard brings discretion most outrageously,
 Always provided it has time to grow—
 And your incipient man in gallantry
 Is not the one you'd tell all secrets to;
 A little age, a little reputation,
 Makes safer confidants in deep flirtation.

XL.

Acting upon this principle, just now
 Her majesty had made a change of lovers;
 All the particulars when, why, and how,
 The tenth past canto of the Don discovers,
 Juan's successor made his opening bow
 With grace, before the revolution movers,
 And having done so to his satisfaction,
 Sunk back into his usual inaction.

XLI.

And Catherine, having nothing much to do,
 And being cooled by one cool paramour,
 Began to take a quite extended view
 Of things she had not thought about before,
 Found some defaulters, and a very few
 Of honest men, handling the public store,
 Punished the guilty heavily, of course,
 And made the innocent fare rather worse.

XLII.

Fixed off some frozen-footed serfs with shoes,
 (In a snow country, what a pleasant tact, hers!)
 Raked up the post-roads, and began to use
 The confiscated funds of some contractors,
 Long-bearded, sharp-nosed, avaricious Jews,
 Having first hung them as state malefactors,
 Upon the principle of "pot and kettle,"
 Great rogues always abominating little!—

XLIII.

Grew moral, and Siberia'd the wight,
 If poor, who happened to have stolen a kiss,
 Put gold in the other balance, and found light,
 What starved nobility had done amiss;
 In short, fixed up the empire so near right,
 That this one adage made its greatest bliss,
 That rank fattened at top where she had got them,
 And squalid poverty starved at the bottom!—

XLIV.

Grew diplomatic, and resolved to put
 A new batch of ambassadors in place,
 And for that purpose, set her spies on foot,
 To make report of each particular case;
 She'd sent, 'tis true, her best already—but
 Less knowing ones would do her less disgrace,
 And changing ministers, as nations give it ye,
 Shows you of course their wonderful activity,

XLV.

And that they don't permit corruption, and
 Needless extravagance and ostentation,
 To take the cash from their own proper lands,
 And spend it in a far outlandish nation;
 True—we can not make out or understand
 The saving—when each new sprig of legation,
 Has such a fee as we should think about fit,
 For salary and all, by way of outfit!

XLVI.

We might have learned her something—we recalled
 If I mistake not, one ambassador
 So soon, his ship was merely overhauled,
 So that he never touched a foreign shore;
 Some wondered, but economy was bawled,
 And all the Nestors of the party swore
 That sending him was right, stopping him, better,
 And all this, saving money to the letter.

XLVII.

Catherine discovered that his envoyship
 Was trading more in love than secret papers;
 Might he not be most likely to let slip
 Some weighty matter, in his amorous capers?
 Of course; so in the next old passage ship
 That followed down the Baltic course to shape
 The count of Strogkanoff, mentioned before, [hers
 Was sent to look the secret business o'er,

XLVIII.

With orders (this is quite a statesman's secret),
 To send Don Juan back if he would come,
 To tell him that the royal joy would be great
 If he would give up papers and come home,
 That the czarina had some two or three great
 Kettles of small fish to boil up and scum,
 Which might redound to his honor and profit,
 If he should make the proper ratio off it.

XLIX.

The honor was a government employ
 After the manner of Sing-Sing or Auburn,
 The profit, that extremely placid joy,
 Where we, without the labor of a job, earn

Boarding and lodging cheap, and do not cloy
 By overfeeding, where there is no jaw born
 Of too much company; and where the quiet
 Is quite too much secure, to breed a riot.

L.

Or maybe, cooling off his southern blood
 With a short travel to Siberia,
 As foreign touring does a world of good
 To young men setting out in wisdom's way;
 This is what Catherine had done if she could;
 We sometimes miss a figure in our play,
 And in her majesty's great game of whist,
 Sometimes, like all the world, her honors missed.

LI.

I have not caught Don Juan yet; well wait,
 I'm after him, and that is something gained,
 You'll see my rhyming horse with ears set straight
 And every muscle in the struggle strained,
 Before I finish; if it is my fate
 To find him ere my steed is travel-sprained,
 I shall wind up the chase with a tableau,
 Some apparitions, and a death or so.

LII.

Is there no justice, styled poetical,
 Administered in the great bulk of cases,
 Merely because the chance is very small
 Of seeing it, otherwise, in many places?
 Don't the good marry, and the wicked fall
 Into bad prisons, troubles, and disgraces?
 And wont the Don furnish an illustration
 Of what bad things flow from bad education?

LIII.

Of course! So up the Baltic! Up—how far?
 Through Skager Rack and Categat, Gulf Finland,
 Channel, and sounding, island, bank, and bar,
 Of that great northern sea, miscalled an inland;
 So to the western breeze bends low the spar,
 That wafts the gallant ship the first to win land,
 Speeds the light vessel up the classic shore,
 And scarcely stops for toll at Elsinore.

LIV.

Juan and Leila, as I told you, stood
 Upon the deck, and swept from England's coast,
 And Juan felt the sea-breeze cool his blood,
 And felt his light hair from his forehead tossed,
 As the white sea-spray rose upon the flood,
 And gathered into dew-drops as it crossed,
 And sparkled on the vesture of the two,
 Who hailed it as an old friend just grown new.

LV.

And Juan's eyes back from the water turned
 To his companion—it was natural,
 Water and woman both alike are spurned
 From confidential friendship by us all,
 Because we call them changing—I have mourned
 That this should be the cause of woman's fall,
 That, love her as we will, we dare not trust her,
 Love will, but confidence will not, pass muster.

LVI.

Juan, however, had no farther thought
 Of this particular analogy,
 Than so much as his quick regards had brought
 To Leila's face and figure, from the sea;
 And having little else to think about,
 He scanned her for a moment, leisurely,
 And saw, what until now he had not seen,
 That she had grown a woman at fifteen.

LVII.

Truth is, our hero had been very busy

At studying other faces, and of course

Had been with other flatteries too dizzy,

To let her "sister feeling" have much force;

He'd found the time at Lady Pinchbeck's easy,

Her rooms' attraction had an unknown source—

Till now, and thinking once, he thought it over,

How easily, if a stranger, he could love her.

LVIII.

It always is acknowledged my misfortune

Not to be able to draw features well,

Particular description's not my forte; one

Attempt at something of the nature, fell

Pronounced a total failure and a short one,

And since that time I've never tried to tell

The color of a heroine's bright eyes—

Sometimes have actually forgot her size.

LIX.

I look at beauty, and its influence steals

Upon me, like a dream upon the night,

An unseen spirit glides around and seals

The keener powers of my closing sight,

And naught to me in a fair face reveals

But an untold perception of delight:

A thought, that I am happy for the moment,

Without one reasonable thought or comment.

LX.

And so, I can't describe it: I have not

The smallest particle of an idea

What color of a woman's eye first shot

The fire of youth and beauty into me—a

Pea-green or purple, gooseberry, or what—

Ever you choose to call it—I can see a

Pupil sometimes, sometimes a pair of lids,

And getting closer all the rest forbids.

LXI.

Pillow your head upon the ripened charms

Of Eve's most perfect daughter—feel her kiss

Thrilling the cold and soulless lip it warms,

With a whole heaven of forgotten bliss,

And feel the gliding of her fair white arms

Stealing upon your neck in a caress,

Describe her if you can, and if you do,

The passion you have feigned her is not true.

LXII.

Woman, to us, should know of no description,

Make her a throned goddess, if you will,

Resolve your mind to bear with her deception,

And as you think her once, so call her still;

I can not bear this auctioneer prescription

Of—so much hair, such eyes, and such a "bill,"

Permit me to remind you with some force,

That woman, though with points, is not a horse.

LXIII.

Leila, the daughter of an eastern land,

Was fair as woman should be; e'en so early—

There was a taper fulness in her hand [nearly

(And bust and foot, when you could see them),

Approaching to the model they have planned

For eastern heroines (which alters yearly),

Pure as the sparkle on the white wave's foam,

And with the heart that pleads to find a home.

LXIV.

I know not whether Juan felt himself

The prouder that his little girl had grown

To be a woman, and too old by half

To stay unloved, had his heart been alone,

And he not her protector; for your sylph

When just preparing for another throne,

Loses her wings and more than half her beauty,

And loving us seems nothing more than duty.

LXV.

So much for young mankind's protection over

Females as young and twice as sensitive,

Cut out, not for a brother, but a lover,

The heart is good if the protection live,

For I have lived, just haply to discover

That Platonism, like a worn-out sieve, [blame's

Lets through some things it should not, and the

To be set down to calling things wrong names.

LXVI.

The first thought was a most unpleasant one—

That she would learn to prize another, soon,

And his most happy guardianship be done

Just when the spring had ripened into June;

That she would soon forget the hand that won

Her life from war's red hand, a hard-wrung boon;

The next thought told him this had been unkind,

And she would hold him, as she ought, in mind.

LXVII.

And then he thought what kind of man, perchance

Might lose his hand and fortune, and win hers?

Where would be given the first and fatal glance

Which does the business, as first love avers?

Would he be knight of England, Spain, or France,

Proud of his red mustaches, or his spurs?

In short, would Leila ever love and leave him,

And if she did, how deeply would it grieve him?

LXVIII.

Sensible questions! you shall know sometime

More than he knew, friend reader; Juan spoke

Of certain projects for the northern clime

That should be finished if they were not broke—

Shooting Count Dumpkoff for a trifling crime,

At which all Leila's gentle kindness woke,

And begged him to be careful of his blood,

And his opponent's also, if he could:

LXIX.

And so conjured him in her own sweet way

To think that he was all she had on earth,

That he had been to her for many a day

A brother true, as he had shared her birth,

And that the blow that carried him away,

Would leave her in her loneliness and dearth

Friendless and unprotected, as he found her,

When at Ismail he threw his arms around her.

LXX.

But Juan took her hands in his, and kissed her

Upon the forehead, and forbade her fear,

Told her that he would hold his little sister

That had outgrown her stature by a year,

Carefully as if all the angels blest her—

And looked to see her held extremely dear,

A reigning goddess, at the Russian court,

While he did up the politics for sport.

LXXI.

Leila had gone below (I'm circumstantial),

And mean to follow on my story now

Without a stoppage—though 'tis true the chance

Be tempting for a moralizing flow, [will

I won't digress except when words will dance well

In philosophic cant, you all know how;—

Leila, I said, had gone below, as most

Raw sailors do, the first time off the coast.

LXXII.

And Juan, very listless, paced the deck,
 Looked at the planks and upward at the ropes,
 And on the weather-bow saw one dim speck
 That was the Danish shore, as he had hopes,
 And thought, if idle, how extremely quick
 Single young gentlemen might get the mopes,
 And wished, having so short a space to walk to,
 There was some decent person there to talk to.

LXXIII.

There were two figures at the vessel's side,
 That might, as he believed, make conversation,
 So, smothering that old Hidalgo pride
 That keeps two strangers silent in vexation,
 When both have ears and mouth strained open wide,
 And both would talk a week by inclination—
 He paused a moment to survey the two,
 Which I shall not pause very long to do;

LXXIV.

But merely say that they were Captain S.,
 Or L., or D., with the etceteras,
 Rigged in the very usual sailor-dress
 That always stamps old sailors as a class,
 Holding with his companion, some short guess
 Of some landmark that they were soon to pass,
 And that said companion wore a mixture
 Of military-cut and sailor-fixture.

LXXV.

Tall, thin, and iron-faced, with every line
 Of his hard countenance begrimed and stained,
 As if the smoke and dust, red battle's sign,
 Beyond the washing, had itself remained,
 With here and there a small infernal mine [ed,
 Where the fierce passions of the man were chain-
 That might be ruin if they once were loosed,
 And looked as if they might have once been used.

LXXVI.

He turned as Juan neared him, and held out
 A hand that looked like iron very much,
 That Juan really thought would be about
 As gentle as a thumb-screw in its touch;
 And though not commonly disposed to flout
 A stranger's courtesy, when given as such—
 The hand had really such an iron look, it
 Was more than half drawn back before he took it,

LXXVII.

And said, "Small courtesies are of some use,
 Especially with strangers, my name is—"
 "No matter," said the stranger, "may the deuce
 Take introductions, and especially this,
 Permit me, by-and-by, to introduce
 My name to you, your name I do not miss,
 You happen, Don, to bear a face, that, met,
 It is not very easy to forget.

LXXVIII.

"I think I heard you talk just now of shooting
 Count Dumpkoff; that would be extremely cruel,
 I had, last month, the happiness of putting
 A very fatal stoppage to his gruel— [ing,
 Fixed him with grave-clothes, and the rest all suit-
 In fact, I killed him lately, in a duel;
 My satisfaction in the act is double,
 That I have happened to save you the trouble.

LXXIX.

"You do not know me yet! you do not hear
 The northern news so quickly as you should,
 Papers, in Russia, come out twice a year,
 And no one reads them, so they do no good,

Despatches are so slow, they make one swear,
 Especially if in a swearing mood,
 However, Dumpkoff will not trouble me,
 Nor you, when you return, most probably."

LXXX.

"I am," said Juan, "very much obliged
 To you, for killing off the Russian bears,
 Although, in fact, my dignity was pledged
 To punish Dumpkoff for some northern airs,
 But if you have him comfortably ledged,
 All the accounts between us, must be squares;
 Kill me some dozen others as a favor,
 And I shall be obliged to you for ever."

LXXXI.

"You kill your own extremely well, Don Juan,
 Ismail has not forgotten you, I think;
 However, flattery's cup is not the true one
 To hand a Spanish gentleman to drink,
 We all like less to hear a deed than do one,
 And fortune's corks would like sometimes to sink,
 No matter! our good deeds sink soon enough,
 And the world's waves with me, are rather rough.

LXXXII.

"I wish to tell you one unhappy truth,
 That Russia, just now, is no place for us,
 Catherine of Russia—do not start—likes youth
 For the first time, but brooks no overplus—
 I've learned the lesson bitterly, in sooth,
 But learned to take it with no general fuss,
 That all things cloy her royal appetite;
 She can not favor even too much fight.

LXXXIII.

"That old blockhead Potemkin, manages
 To keep those cut-throat Turks three quarters
 To use up Catherine's yearly finances, [whipped,
 And murder off her troops as fast as shipped;
 Wo to the man who makes out more or less,
 She could not keep her glory up, except
 She had that old-contested battle-ground,
 To make her mighty name in arms resound.

LXXXIV.

"The smoke has hardly yet worn off my face,
 That grimmed it in that old she-tiger's service;
 No man dare say that I am in disgrace,
 But we are dead, with no employ to nerve us,
 Potemkin rules it in his pride of place,
 And gives such work as he sees fit to carve us,
 My admiral's flag is hardly a whole shirt,
 But will be dish-cloths when I eat such dirt.

LXXXV.

"Well, let it pass; we all must have our time
 For good or evil fortune, good or evil,
 My reputation has been one half crime,
 If crime is bringing pride to my own level!
 It makes a pretty jingle in a rhyme— [devil;
 The Scottish blackguard, Paul Jones, and the
 I'm called all three, by various fits and turns,
 And may be devil, all except the horns."

LXXXVI.

"The devil, if you will," said Juan, "I
 Have no uncommon hatred for the name;
 Names are bestowed without a reason why,
 And your case, admiral, may be the same,
 Pardon me, that my unexpected eye
 Had no suspicion of the rank you claim;
 And I will pardon that you talked so long,
 Leaving my guesses wholly in the wrong.

LXXXVII.

"I know no reason why my foot should fear
To tread the Russian boundaries; and for you—
I am surprised that killing off too near
Has injured your disposal of the blue;
And for Potemkin, the old Russian bear
Had only one such despicable spew:
I owe her no allegiance as her right,
And to compel it, she has not the might!"

LXXXVIII.

"So, to be sure, keep clear of her," said Jones,
"As I shall: let me tell you in a word
The treatment I have shared from Europe's thrones,
Denmark and France, the Russian being the third,
Treatment that no unspotted nation owns,
Though it has soiled America's young bird:
They all have pampered me till pay-day came—
And, truly, then they had forgot my name!"

LXXXIX.

"However, of yourself, it was no secret
At Catherine's court some fourteen days ago,
That you were but recalled to hear and see great
Changes in ministerial overthrow;
Even that court can not hold two or three great;
You were successful in the opening throw,
And let me caution you, as one true friend,
To let your leaving it remain the end."

XC.

"And not return to Russia?"—"Not return:
You have it—do you ever take advice?"
"Undoubtedly, brave friend! I never spurn
What may be gained at such a moderate price;
Give me your hand, for thanks: if I return,
A brave man's words are kept; let this suffice,
And do not think me fool enough to spare
A head that fits, as mine does, to a hair."

XCI.

"The Danish coast!—I leave you."—"For the court?"
"Ay; Christiern's throne is mortgaged for a sum
That they will pay me when they're out of sport
At other things: and when will that time come?
About as soon as I fight ship or fort
At any Christian ruler's trump or drum;
And if, for want of change, my spirits lag,
I'll fight, as I have fought, Paul Jones's flag!"

XCII.

Paul Jones the corsair, as they often call him—
Paul Jones the brave man, as he really was—
Though sleeping where no changes can befall him,
Should be safe from Detraction's iron jaws!
And show me not the man who stops to maul him,
The first sea-eagle of our infant cause!
And yet his memory has more contradiction
Than any old Greek source of lie and fiction.

XCIII.

What is man's reputation? Some strange thing
That all creation can not catch or hold;
No one knows whence the very currents spring
That form a character for base or bold;
Flying reports, for ever on the wing—
Given in heat, and stereotyped when cold—
Make up two thirds even of history's page,
And have done so, since writing's earliest age.

XCIV.

Within two days, I've seen two specimens:
One very favorable life of Jones,
Giving him glory above other men's
Which no one in his sober senses owns;

The other piles his crimes by fives and tens,
And makes a walking spectre of his bones:
And both, being on the reasonable side,
Excite my admiration and my pride.

XCV.

Possessing talents fitted for command,
It was his fate to be a tool for men,
As he has been for me—called but to stand
Between Don Juan's visiting again
The Russian empress in her northern land,
And keeping all the circumstances plain
To make him turn again to other climes,
Where we shall see him at the proper times.

CANTO VI.

I.

WHAT then? I do not know, nor you, nor you,
Nor either one of the eternal squad
Who keep my strained eyes settled black and blue,
And my chafed spirit more than two thirds mad;
Who knows the consequence of what they do?—
Whether for very good or very bad?
And who would turn their chosen path one jot
To change for good or ill another's lot?

II.

Who cares? Ay, now I have it: I am starting
A dissertation upon selfishness—
A microscopic glass to view the heart in—
And show you what a most confounded mess
It is, and how self puts the bigger part in,
And how we don't care two pence for distress,
Provided we are not too near connected,
And happen not to have our purse affected.

III.

Who cares? 'tis not who knows—we know enough
To put our friendly words and kindly deeds
In requisition, if the softer stuff
Of hearts was easier "pumped up" at needs,
And we were not so given to rebuff
The application, when young Mercy pleads:
She being the only woman young and beautiful
That's ever kicked away by the undutiful.

IV.

Who cares? (this is my text)—who sympathizes
Even in feeling, let alone the purse?
We rhymers have a sympathy that rises
And spawns itself in execrable verse;
But Feeling without interest otherwise is
A guest starved out and banished, if no worse—
Killed, if she proves herself too inconvenient,
And pensioned off quite lightly when most lenient.

V.

The world is Indian: the despised red man
Gives an idea of our social state:
The circles of our love are on his plan—
So far extending, in our love or hate,
As our tribe reaches: it is all we can
To interest us in our kinsmen's fate:
Our love sinks with the stone into the wave,
And at the ripple's edge finds out a grave!

VI.

Who would extend it? It is right, no doubt,
 Our care should have a boundary—it is well
 That after such a distance, we shut out
 Even the feeling of a funeral-knell;
 'Tis a convenient garb that wraps about
 Feelings that choke us if allowed to swell
 To the full measure of man's social kindness,
 And God has sent a boon even in blindness.

VII.

I did not mean (I think not) to reproach
 Mankind for stoicism, but to say
 That apathy unknown makes its approach,
 Creeping upon us slowly, day by day;
 Time has been, that the beetle and the roach
 My foot would shun, as careful not to slay
 As it is now to crush them, if they come
 Too near me when Good-Humor's not at home!

VIII.

I should have "passed by on the other side,"
 And left the wounded Jew to his Samaritan,
 Who doubtless took some strange, outlandish pride
 In doing singular things; I do not bear it in
 My system to swim up against the tide:
 I have some kindness, but no heart to wear it in,
 And probably have learned to keep aloof
 From proper feeling—shall I give a proof?

IX.

Three months ago, it might be—not long since—
 I bent beside the couch of coming death
 One fearful night, when (it is no pretence)
 My spirit's heaven hung upon a breath—
 When youth, and my own love, beneath my glance
 Lay withering like the olden fabled wreath,
 Poisoned with heaven's dew, and dying, dying,
 To fill a grave where we should both be lying.

X.

I wept—she was my own!—I looked around
 On the still beauty of the calm moonlight
 That (music almost breathing into sound)
 Lay gorgeously upon the summer night,
 And looked upon the shining stars that bound
 The diadem of God's eternal night—
 And thought it was unkind for them to shine
 And light his world, when death was dark on mine!

XI.

I looked to see the stars of heaven pale
 Before the heaviness of my own grief:
 And saw one cloud across the bright moon sail,
 And thought its fleeting shadow a relief;
 And thought it bitterness that I should wail
 The falling of my second spring, the leaf
 That promised o'er the ruined shrine to grow,
 And have so few to mark the final blow.

XII.

I dreamed of death and burial: I thought o'er
 The dark hearse and the coffin—the slow crowd
 Pressing to see the silent face that wore
 An angel's beauty in its face, and bowed
 Unto decay so sweetly; and once more [loud
 I knew that smiles would gleam and words be
 As they were every day: I thought, and wept—
 Praying her burial might be sadder kept!

XIII.

She lived!—And, reader, do not turn away
 In sheer disgust, if you can help it: I,
 Of course, for days was in a solemn way,
 And kept all things most reverentially—

Was grateful and all that—was heard to say
 That I should look on death with chastened eye,
 And that a mourning-room I scarce could tread
 Without a thought as if it held my dead.

XIV.

Plaintively spoken!—Two weeks afterwards,
 Young, beautiful, and all, perished by drowning,
 The wife of an old friend—and our regards
 Called us his funeral sacrament surrounding;
 And while that holy gathering of words—
 "The resurrection and the life"—was sounding,
 The usual pathetics were gone off in,
 And I dozed very nicely by the coffin!

XV.

Ehem!—But do not say that I am selfish
 Above the average: I only keep
 My head inside, like turtles and all shell-fish,
 And snooze it nicely in a six months' sleep:
 We all are wayward, wild, and very elish,
 And should be oysters, far below the deep,
 To carry out our wishes, and lie still,
 Alone, apart, and far from every ill.

XVI.

Our talk is of ourselves—our egotism
 Fills up the vacant space; carry us off
 To foreign climes and customs—paint a schism
 In England's church—speak of Spain's graveyard
 Or tell us of an Apennine abysm— [cough—
 We'll listen to you quietly enough;
 But never trust me, if we do not come,
 At the first chance, and settle down at home!

XVII.

We read long poems of a hundred cantos
 To people very sick, stretched out on sofas,
 Concerning
 And warriors' scalps, and other Indian trophies,
 With parted lovers and their various want-to's,
 Keeping us under such a pain as no phiz
 Could tell the half of: for one such infliction
 Believe me, I've the keenest recollection—

XVIII.

And mean, when opportunity shall offer,
 To pay my friend in his own proper coin,
 For reading such a lot at his own proffer:
 I'll make him hear four times as much of mine—
 I care not if he curse me or turn scoffer—
 I'll read it to him calmly, line by line!
 If he live through all that, I've no revenge
 Severe enough even to make him cringe.

XIX.

Humph! I have read you quite a moral lecture
 On egotism, selfishness, and so forth:
 The wolf, they say, is quite a good protector
 From other beasts of all the lambs that go forth
 To this world's pasture; he himself may hector
 So much the easier; if I had no foe worth
 Disputing with in selfishness, I should
 Play out my egotism by the rood.

XX.

I should write fourteen cantos of reflection,
 And personal adventure, and stale jest;
 And three times in each canto, for connexion,
 Mention Don Juan's name, and let him rest;
 But conscience has the habit of correction,
 And will not let me do as I think best—
 And hints that though I fill the largest shelf,
 The world has some one else beside myself.

XXXI.

Fancy these stars exceedingly expressive,
 And answering in the place of many words !
 I'm slightly tired of being so digressive,
 And must call in my various flocks and herds :
 The fiat of my publisher's decisive,
 And he has clipped the wings of half my birds
 By hinting that a certain stated length
 Is all that is allotted to my strength.

XXXII.

Fancy these stars to answer in the place
 Of time and distance—let them be three years—
 And such a simple gathering of space
 As 'twixt the Baltic and South France appears :
 Our little drama changes to those days
 When France's mighty drench of blood and tears
 Was gathering to its overflow, and Error
 Was grinding axes for the Reign of Terror !

XXXIII.

Oh ! beautiful, and so forth, is South France,
 When peasant-girls, and so forth, go it strong
 At certain moves, and so forth, called a dance,
 And certain notes, and so forth, called a song !
 (I could write stanzas if I had a chance,
 And didn't happen to count octaves wrong)—
 Delicious is her air, and fine her sky,
 And that I do not live there you know why.

XXXIV.

There was a fine house, and a gentleman
 Of elegance and leisure ; and a wife—
 A mother at eighteen—who, if one can,
 Would make a very paradise of life—
 The *seur de Chassory*, who sometime ran
 A course with Lafayette in Freedom's strife,
 And had returned with him, to be respected
 For doing deeds their worshippers neglected.

XXXV.

And Leila was a woman—and beside
 The *seur de Chassory* had garnered up
 Her woman's personal and maternal pride,
 And wished no other crowning to her cup
 Than had been hers—two years a happy bride,
 And one a mother, with her babe to sup
 At the heart's fountain with her : Juan's guess
 Of who should win her, scarce had time to miss.

XXXVI.

And she had ne'er forgotten the sweet strain
 Sung on the Baltic, but at vintage-time
 Looked out upon the purple grapes that rain
 Such nectar-drops upon that summer clime—
 And thought her love for France had sprung amain
 At the first moment, from a simple rhyme
 Sung far away by one who could not come
 To look upon a loved-one's grave at home.

XXXVII.

Juan danced on in Paris—in that court
 That, under poor Marie Antoinette,
 Learned all the fashionable world to sport,
 And more than half the richer world to bet—
 Kept spendthrift youngsters free, though very short,
 And those who could get credit, well in debt—
 A court that, for its folly and its vice,
 Paid, in a little while, so sad a price !

XXXVIII.

The closing hour of the legitimates,
 The last day of the Bourbons—who in fact
 Perished with Louis XVI.—history rates
 That most unfortunate of monarchs, cracked ;

I know not—men must fall with falling states—
 And it is probable the most he lacked
 Was, one hour's resolution at the last :
 And then, perhaps, the hour of grace was past !

XXXIX.

There is no Bourbon since, no courtly pride
 After the olden fashion : with the empire,
 Lowborn and highborn each pushed each aside,
 And each was but endeavoring to jump higher ;
 Napoleon had no olden birth to guide,
 And seekers pulled the court-bell by the camp—
 Louis le Desire was fat and gouty, [wire ;
 And Charles the Tenth was splenetic and grouchy.

XL.

And Louis Philippe, last, and not the worst,
 Thinks less of ancient pride than stock-exchanges,
 Holds up a nation that tries hard to burst,
 Gets nearly killed by various revenges :
 Knows well by whom and wherefore he is cursed—
 And rides but seldom by some certain ranges !—
 You can not call him Bourbon, at the least,
 And the legitimates have long since ceased.

XLI.

There are some plants, they tell me, that bear flower
 But once, and that when ready to decay ;
 And falling kingdoms have one glorious hour—
 Torches flash out before they pass away—
 An illustration of convulsive power
 That makes us, when most sorrowful, so gay :
 Such was enjoyment, fashion, and society,
 The hour before France burst with her impiety !

XLII.

Voltaire was dead some years—just long enough
 To make men fight about his memory—
 To make some quote his idiotic stuff
 As wit and very gentle pleasantry ;
 And others, whom he might have handled rough,
 Denouncing every word as blasphemy :
 Part of their moral aptitude was chaff—
 Voltaire blasphemed a little more than half !

XLIII.

Immoral as France was, and irreligious,
 There was a certain splendor in her fall—
 That shows how, ere her people grew litigious,
 Wealth, wit, and beauty, ruled it over all ;
 Her moral degradation was prodigious—
 So had been her corruption and her thrall ;
 And she but paid, as most rich livers pay—
 By gout—for having lived too well one day.

XLIV.

And Juan lived upon the tide—the rich
 And titled young ambassador, who late
 Had figured in the north, at such a pitch
 Was toasted, balled, and suppered, in high state !
 The only contest was, the struggle which
 Should have the honor to be next his plate,
 Or opposite him at the table, or
 His rival at the chess-board's mimic war.

XLV.

And this had lasted for two years : 'twas strange
 That mortal man on fashion's tide could float
 More than two weeks unrivalled ! yet no change
 Had fallen on the set of Juan's coat—
 And still, as ever, Marmalot Durange
 Fitted him with his *bijou* of a boot—
 Still his cravats were laid so smoothly down,
 And he was still the top pearl in the crown !

XLVI.

Never, indeed, since Mephistopheles
 Had sported Doctor Faust by way of lion,
 And trying to set him the most at ease,
 Had set some fifty titled females dying—
 Never had fashion's ruler held in peace
 His sceptre for so long, with no one trying
 To drive him out with novelty, that lever
 That moves the fashionable world for ever.

XLVII.

That this *can* be so, does not need a proof—
 To those who but remember how for years
 The man who like D'Orsay tiles his roof,
 Or wears his coat, may laugh at common sneers,
 And that from him the spoiler stands aloof,
 And he, from all observances, appears
 Cut out to have a very slight new pressing done,
 And take another girl for Lady Blessington.

XLVIII.

Juan's ascension to the highest seat
 Of elegant Parisian notoriety,
 Had sent him out, at early hours, to meet
 With pistols, some opponents in society,
 Till duels, even, were stale jokes of late,
 And could not rouse incipient satiety;
 Three months before we found him out, he swore
 Even hair-triggers might be made a bore!

XLIX.

I choose to look at him the first time, stepping
 Off the side steps of Lady Tandem's carriage,
 And handing out a lady who was reaping
 In fatness, the bad fruits of early marriage—
 And with the other hand, a fair girl, tripping
 As beautiful young girls will do at her age,
 Whose fair round cheeks, half-hidden by a veil,
 Have yet to point a moral to my tale.

L.

Three years, say from nineteen to twenty-two,
 Twenty to twenty-three, or any three
 That brings the man forth—open to our view
 Some curious changes—any man might be
 A moral lesson, could you read him through
 In those three years—thank Heaven no one reads
 I have succeeded, so far, in concealing [me,
 Some rather strange phenomena in feeling.

LI.

Three years had done their common work on him,
 Though such as few would mark; the curving lip
 Was fuller, and much heavier; in the trim
 Of the full beard, was the decisive clip
 Of well-grown manhood, fuller was the limb;
 An extra fulness at the waist and hip
 Bespoke the epicure in embryo,
 Wanting but age and apathy, to grow.

LII.

The brow was fair as ever, but strong lines
 Circled it when he smiled, the hair had thickened
 Upon his temples, but like tendrils vines
 Clustered no longer, and the face was quickened
 With sudden changes, as if many mines
 Lay hid beneath the surface, scarcely reckoned;
 Less winning, but more marked for woman's eye,
 And still as ever, noticed when passed by.

LIII.

And that fair girl—beautiful as the love
 That such can bear in purity, that mixture
 Of the young fawn with the complaining dove,
 By far too softened for a striking picture,

Too fair and too blue-eyed to live and move
 In the wild passion of an eastern victor—
 Was the last idol of his every-day
 Devotion, in a love so light and gay.

LIV.

It was a gala-night; the fine hotel
 Of the great marquis of La Spree was lit
 With an illumination, that did well
 To save the cost of lamplight in the street,
 And on the passer's ears the music fell,
 And as they looked up, might be seen to flit
 Shadows and glimmerings grotesque and uncertain,
 Painted anew on every gorgeous curtain.

LV.

It was a gala-night; the old description
 Of balls and routs may answer in this place,
 There was the usual quantum of deception
 Practised by way of paint, on many a face,
 But that's a secret, and it must be kept one,
 I will not bring fine cheeks into disgrace;
 And such a rout as Paris brings together—
 And nowhere else—danced onward like a feather.

LVI.

Do not turn over leaf—I shall not bore you
 With stale pomposities I never saw,
 You have the least half of the book before you,
 And as I fix the traces, let me draw;
 If you are patient, lady, I adore you
 Upon anticipation, 'tis our law—
 Ours, as poor scribblers, to have pleasant lips
 For one who reads us through and never skips.

LVII.

It was a gala-night, and dancing, old
 In date, but ever light and ever new—
 Warmed up some blood that had been running cold,
 And heated younger pulses, till they grew
 A little too complaisant; we are told
 At least, that this is what the waltz will do,
 And do not doubt it, from the feverish cheeks
 That mix among the pale, like apple-streaks.

LVIII.

In one of those small niches, which, it seems,
 Are built in ball-rooms to put statues in
 To Love and Fortune, where the lamplight gleams
 Less brightly, and the curtain is a screen,
 And where sometimes youth sinks away and dreams
 Of one who is no more where she has been—
 There, with a curtain and six feet to hide them,
 Stood two who had no secrets to divide them:

LIX.

Or should have had none—if you will but look
 At the fifth picture of poor Margaret,
 As drawn by Retzsch's pencil in that book
 Of Goethe's, containing Faust's career and fate—
 Showing a woman's pride for once forsook,
 And giving place to one long passionate
 And breathing kiss upon his lips, and round
 The neck, her pressing arms so softly wound—

LX.

You will discover all that I could say
 Of Juan pouring in the willing ear
 Of young Ella Durosnel, as hers lay
 Upon his shoulder—all she loved to hear,
 And credited as only woman may,
 Who from deceit has never learned to fear;
 And you will think how birth was cast aside,
 In that abandonment of woman's pride.

LXI.

She was the daughter of a high-born race,
 And loved one not beneath her; fame had told
 That Juan's blood ran welling from a place
 As old and red and spotless as Spain's gold,
 Rumor had given him her pretty face,
 And her his hand, so long, the tale was old;
 And no one wondered that his thrilling glance
 And her light foot, were missing in the dance.

LXII.

And Juan spoke of Spain, in earnest tones,
 And told her that a mother's death had left
 Broad acres, in that sweetest of all zones,
 Free and untrammelled, for a bridal gift;
 That his career was done with Europe's thrones,
 And that the wing that bore them should be swift
 Toward the land of grove and orange-bower,
 Where life and love should circle in an hour.

LXIII.

And that one interview was the full rose
 Blown from the bud of happiness for her—
 A time such as but once until life's close
 Can set the fountains of the heart astir;
 And when the ecstasy no further goes,
 And fate forbids aught deeper to recur
 To memory as the crowning point—oh! deep
 Is that remembrance, and too sad to weep!

LXIV.

And there had been a time, to him, and me,
 When the delight had been reciprocal,
 When his vows had breathed naught but purity,
 And mine been true, because they were our all;
 Before undue familiarity
 With more than this in woman, like Eve's fall,
 Had left us knowing more of what we should not,
 And calling back the ignorance we could not.

LXV.

My scenes are but daguerrotype—I skip
 All minor life, to look on the tableaux,
 I can not pause to say how each would trip
 In quadrille or cotillon, or to show
 How Ella moved, with that kiss on her lip,
 Before a company who watched her so:
 I shall but turn the picture, and hold up
 The darker side of Juan's golden cup.

LXVI.

I shall but show you, in another street,
 Another scene, and tell you he had met
 Another as a lover—how less sweet
 Than that fair girl—even when he had set
 His heart and soul to win her gentle feet
 To so much love as blessed his bosom yet;
 And I shall show you the deserted one,
 And touch some little points, and I am done.

LXVII.

It was a minor street in Paris—one
 Scarce noticed as the passer-on moved through,
 So deep and narrow, that the noon-day sun
 When it crept in, had some close work to do,
 Its buildings clothed in one eternal dun
 And dusky color, such as you can view
 In the old cities only, where men built
 In good old times, such nice retreats for guilt.

LXVIII.

One of those streets, however, which enclose,
 Beneath old walls, some very pleasant rooms—
 Whose outside filth something offends the nose,
 But is made up inside by nice perfumes;

One of the streets that suit the taste of those
 Who love surprises, sudden lights, and glooms,
 And so forth—in the street, and human kind,
 Is many a specimen of buried mind.

LXIX.

Excuse the street's name, and excuse the number,
 Both are well known to modern history,
 Within the ruins of that house there slumber
 The ashes of the burnt-out '93:
 Within that house's walls came chief and member
 To plot the overthrow of tyranny,
 And build up one still stronger, and there met
 Collot d'Herbois, Robespierre, Marat,

LXX.

The men of blood in embryo, awaiting
 The issue of their plans at different stages;
 The dim old house went down by speculating
 Some years ago, in one of its old rages,
 And I have thought all changes have a fate in,
 From shifting residences to bird-cages:
 The birds are flown or dead, for want of care,
 And we forget the old house, "where we were."

LXXI.

Within that house and then, were ripening
 The seeds of anarchy and ruin, men
 Whose hands were set to bonds against their king,
 Met in the early nightfall; after ten
 There were lure birds for ever on the wing,
 And any man who stepped within it then,
 Would have bethought him of some pleasant place,
 Where virtue grows to vice with easy grace.

LXXII.

For vice in Paris, had, and has perhaps
 More neatness, and less paltry fine display,
 Than any other row of gins and traps
 That we could light on in a common way;
 France gives to immorality less raps
 Over the knuckles, than another may,
 Partly because she makes less show and glitter,
 And partly that you don't know where to hit her.

LXXIII.

There's but one room, however, where we have
 The slightest business, and then and there
 Were two who should require a separate stove,
 To paint them for you as they really were;
 Two around whom it is my choice to weave
 A diplomatic and mysterious air:
 A male and female character, of course,
 Two lovers, or a pair of something worse.

LXXIV.

It was a room of moderate dimensions,
 Yet fitted up so light and airily,
 That you forgot its very slight pretensions;
 The furniture was elegant, and free
 From the grotesque arrangement of old mansions,
 And without aught of sensuality
 In pictures, statuary, drapery, couches,
 Or aught else, in so far as eye-sight vouches.

LXXV.

There was one sofa, and upon it lay
 Not sat or lounged, but lay, a man of fifty—
 Thick-set, harsh-featured, with hair slightly gray
 Scattered upon a brow as coarse and rifty
 As if an iron stone were dressed away
 To form his countenance; another gift he
 Possessed in its perfection, was an eye
 Scowling and dark as any northern sky.

LXXVI.

And he was looking upward with that cold
 Unchanging fixed expression, which alone
 Can be perfected in a man grown old
 In sin or grief, to years beyond his own;
 That look which seems as little to unfold,
 As if the eyes were looking out through stone—
 Upon a woman standing at his side,
 With her arms folded, as in scorn or pride.

LXXVII.

And she, might have been half his age—at least
 Four years past twenty, that eventful four
 That fills the taper of the rounded waist, [lower,
 And droops the swan-like neck some half inch
 That gives the heart of woman its full feast,
 If you but leave her room to spread it o'er,
 Or thins her, if neglected or uncherished,
 Till twenty-five finds half her roses perished.

LXXVIII.

Lip, eye, cheek, form, were full; the figure taller
 Than my ideal, some would call her coarse
 At the first look, then scarce know how to call her,
 The third look would impress you with the force,
 Vigor, and strength, so visible in all her
 Gestures and glances; with an eye—your horse
 Of finest blood could scarce give one correction,
 (A horse's eye, dear reader, is perfection).

LXXIX.

The hair, just reaching to the neck, was heavy
 And closely curled, black as the wearer's eye,
 Not tinged or sunburnt, neither "soft" nor "wavy,"
 (The fashion just at present, by-the-bye,
 About which all the penny-a-liners rave—I
 Have given up this ideal with a sigh,
 If you will have hair curly, let it curl
 Close as you please, just as the heart-strings twirl,

LXXX.

And I will love the wearer, as I do).
 No matter; there was scorn and bitter pride
 Written upon that woman's cheek, its hue
 Might have been ruddy, ere the roses died,
 But now the ghastly paleness glimmers through,
 And the crossed hands were pressed unto her side,
 As if convulsively—as if she had
 Grown either very sorrowful, or mad.

LXXXI.

Women do both sometimes; and there was that
 In the few words that her companion spoke,
 Potent enough to rouse up senses, flat
 And dull as England's everlasting smoke,
 Words that would set the vultures gnawing at
 The heart-strings, were they not already broke;
 Words few but bitter, such as some have heard,
 And smote the teller for a lying word.

LXXXII.

"False, true, it may be, is it true, Saint Just?"
 And the words hardened, "did you ever lie?"
 "Foully, but to my enemies; I trust
 Marie, that you do not doubt me, why
 I should much sooner let my powers rust
 Than waste them: if he had not raised the cry:
 Your gallant has gone back to higher life,
 And will not make aught less than Ella wife.

LXXXIII.

"Your blood, I fancy, is the sole objection;
 Blood, blood, you know; and maybe you have
 All that you had to give, in that connexion, [granted
 And so"—"Saint Just! this taunt alone was
 wanted

To make me faster in my own correction,
 And let me know the seeds that you have planted
 Were told me for your purposes, not mine;
 No falsehood! or you hang with your own line!"

LXXXIV.

"Not by your information, let me tell you,"
 Answered Saint Just, "I fear not your proposing,
 You may but hasten matters if you will, you
 May make us jerk the net that we are closing,
 And with your namesake, they will likely kill you,
 It would be common blood, with royal oozing;
 But of the marriage, do but ask Don Juan,
 And ten to one he says my tale's a true one.

LXXXV.

"I never knew him tell a downright lie,
 Though he has crept round fifty, he is young,
 At least enough to deal in sophistry;
 And I believe his conscience, like his tongue,
 Exactly true, when there's no motive by;
 You may consider your attractions flung
 Where he has flung a dozen such, in youth,
 And what should make him fear to tell the truth!"

LXXXVI.

He rose, and saw that fiery woman pacing
 As woman paces, up and down the room,
 And with no word of parting notice, placing
 His cloak about him, and a hat whose gloom
 Shaded his face completely, was just facing
 The outer entrance, as the sullen boom
 From some church tower, told the hour of ten,
 And gone before it passed away again.

LXXXVII.

I shall not enter in the bloody temple
 Of France's horrors, that eternal stage
 Has been so often trodden; I like hemp ill,
 And hate the guillotine's unpleasant edge,
 And think a place in history's crowded camp, ill
 Purchased by signing any kind of pledge,
 To tell the truth, or do the truth, or keep
 Any conditions; so I'll take a leap

LXXXVIII.

Before the final canto; but just now
 I'll dabble in the present policy
 Of France's revolutionizers; how
 They played the cogged dice of diplomacy,
 And why Saint Just cared what the final bow
 Of Juan to Marie chanced to be,
 And how the leaders pulled the leading string,
 To free the trap before they touched the spring.

LXXXIX.

The purity in style, the silver tone,
 If we may call it so, that fashion wears,
 When carried properly, having a throne
 That even royalty but seldom shares,
 Makes up an aristocracy unknown,
 Uncounted, in all national affairs,
 And governs, in a national well being,
 More than the world have any tact for seeing.

XC.

And commonly, the very elevation
 Is the safeguard; not as the saying runs,
 It being well agreed that rank and station
 Make men a better target for all guns;
 It maybe, that in many a relation,
 The high are looked upon as Heaven's sons,
 Regarded as a something, higher worth
 Than those who plod upon the meaner earth.

XCI.

Naught else but this devotion saves one hour
 Royalty; naught but this keeps up to-day,
 At decent standing, men whose real power
 To force respect, has long since passed away;
 Men recollect that once there was a flower
 Where now a paltry weed, useless and gay,
 Flaunts in its pride: and so they let it stand,
 Lest they should hold a sacrilegious hand.

XCII.

And France, no doubt, had her idolatry:
 'Tis certain that she had enough when loose—
 Idolatry for guilt and blasphemy—
 And from the use, no doubt, grew the abuse:
 And the few demagogues, who stealthily
 Plotted the downfall of all olden use,
 Knew that they must clip off the common people's
 Habit of looking up to certain steeples!

XCIII.

They knew that while a spark of that romance
 Which gave protection to the higher classes,
 Lingered among the lower classes, France
 Would not be red enough with gory faces!
 And so they watched, as with an eagle glance,
 To cast a leader from the people's graces,
 And exile, from necessity or choice,
 All who might help to calm the people's voice.

XCIV.

As Juan had won *all* hearts, he had won
 The hearts of Paris: at his carriage-window
 Were heads uncovered to the noonday sun
 With the obsequiousness of a Hindoo;
 None seemed to love the people more, and none
 Was more loved by them (all this flattery can do),
 None would have answered quite so well in linking
 Both ranks together, to keep both from sinking.

XCV.

Saint Just had watched, and not alone, to find
 One opportunity by which to break
 The golden chain which really seemed to bind
 Juan and the Parisians neck by neck—
 And found it: the strong whisper which assigned
 Juan to Ella Durosnel, would make
 The moving point, when he could once awaken
 The jealousy of her he had forsaken!

XCVI.

In this he had succeeded: the bold girl
 Marie, in whose very masculine
 And vigorous thought Juan had loved to curl
 The passions loosened when kept always fine;
 She would not brook the falling of one pearl
 From the proud diadem she loved to twine;
 She knew no difference between red blood,
 And cared not for pure water or pure mud!

XCVII.

Saint Just had scarcely left the house, when she
 Sprang up, and smoothing down her heavy hair,
 Stood on the doorstep, most apparently
 To cool her hot brow in the chilly air—
 And waited, maybe, in the hope that he
 Might once more turn his nightly footsteps there;
 But found no more of him, except the note,
 Slight and expressive, that it seems he wrote—

XCVIII.

To tell her—nothing—but a kind of hint
 That she need not expect him any more!
 The marriage, whose most virtuous intent
 Forbade him to recross that threshold-door,

He left her to find out when done, in print!

The note, it seems, was written just before
 He tumbled into bed at half past two,
 Where I shall follow, as this canto's through!

CANTO VII.

I.

'Tis the last canto: I'm very tired
 Even of Literature, my old friend;
 The labor whose enthusiasm fired
 My spirit first, approaches to its end:
 And, truly, I should heavily be hired
 Before I would go back again and lend
 So much of youth and memory again
 To the continuance of so long a strain.

II.

The labor that was once a work of love,
 Has grown to be a drudgery: look back
 Only two cantos, and my words will prove
 The instability on which we pack
 Our thoughts and feelings—how like Noah's dove
 We plead to be allowed the olden track,
 And brought quotations for authority
 To prove why I wrote rhymes so constantly!

III.

It is the curse of life, to spring amain
 From the first goal, and falter ere the end,
 Dropping beside us on the thirsty plain
 The heart's blood of our very dearest friend
 Who strove to be a sharer in our vain
 And weary struggle; censure or commend
 As the world may, we miss the friendly tones
 That were the first, the old familiar ones!

IV.

Could we be sure of bearing to the end
 All who set out with us—could we but show,
 To every one of them, how we arose
 To power, or pressed on through pain and woe—
 Till those who loved should smile on us, and those
 Who scoffed our early triumph, learn to know
 That we were no presumptuous fools who dared
 To claim an honor we had never shared—

V.

Could we but call around us at the last
 All who had known us—youth and middle age,
 From whom our actions, as we hurried past,
 Had won a moment's plaudit on life's stage,
 And bid them look upon the halo cast
 Around the poet's forehead and his page,
 And point them to the sunlight on our sea,
 Showing them what we were, not hoped to be—

VI.

Could we do this, it might be triumph; but
 It can not, may not be so: every year
 Have mourning-trains gone wearily to put
 Our fairest and our bravest on the bier,
 To close them in the silent grave, and shut
 The heavy sod above the senseless ear;
 And they can never hear what we so long
 To breathe them, in a gush of mellow song!

VII.

We shall be all alone, before the hair
Grows gray upon our temples—we shall be
Companionless; but not before harsh Care
Has done the work of Time and Apathy,
And left us sadly qualified to bear
The burial of Affection! This from me
Thus early—that I know my heart is palling,
And that the leaves of love and fame are falling!

VIII.

This—that I know how sadly I have changed
From the enthusiast that I have been—
That I have felt my warmest thoughts estranged
From the one only love that knew no sin,
And that in the poetic field I ranged
Once eagerly, the very flowers begin
To look like weeds and rushes, hardly worth
Stooping to pick up from the common earth.

IX.

The few scenes that remain have little space
For me to dwell on; yet the hours that flew
O'er Juan's horizon, the last few days,
Were bright with Eden's own celestial hue;
They were a quiet pause in Love's hot race—
A time when he sat silently to view
The close of his amours, as he believed,
Truly, in part—though fearfully deceived.

X.

It was a graceful mansion, although plain
And free from ostentation, where the fair
And sweet young Ella hid her from the train
Of foppish followers who circled where
Her feet had lately glided: light and vain
To that fair girl were all the pomp and glare
Of all the gay saloons of Paris, decked
In all that fashion leads you to expect.

XI.

It was a graceful mansion, but not rich
In the accustomed splendor of the time,
But wealthy in the fine old memories, which
Had made its owners proud with many a rhyme,
And hung proud pictures up, in many a niche,
Of names that never had been stained with crime,
Of men whose names are set on history's page
In all the glory of a bygone age.

XII.

That mansion told alone of what had been
The portion of a noble line, decayed—
Whose last sole representative was seen
Purer than ever, in a simple maid,
With whose blood hundreds would have mingled in
Blood pure as in a monarch's bosom played;
Although no one, who stirkled for a fortune,
But would have reckoned Ella's as a short one.

XIII.

An orphan, and alone, yet noble hands
Had taken hers, and noble eyes been cast
Upon her head in kindness; and the bands
That bound her, ere her earliest years were past,
Were bonds of gratitude for names whose stands
Were high in royal favor to the last:
And here had Juan found her on the tide
Of fashion, but not poisoned with its pride.

XIV.

And for a week they missed her from the halls
Of light and music—missed her from the dance—
Missed her from breakfasts and from morning calls:
And tho' they thought of her blue eye perchance,

She was not bound so in the feverish thralls
Of fashion as to court the general glance,
And be the star of all mankind, when one
Had grown her cynosure, and one alone.

XV.

"Love in a cottage," say you? It might be
Though in a crowded city: the loose hours
That Juan had dashed off so lavishly, [flowers,
Were spent beside her light harp wreathed with
As she sung songs, each one Love's lullaby,
And he told tales of skies more bright than ours,
Where they would be in days to come, and pass
Life's summer like a pleasant song: alas!—

XVI.

Alas! for all life's broken plans; alas!
For all that once we might have been, and are not;
We have looked forward through a magic glass
To sunny islands where our places were not,
And sung sweet songs to those whom we let pass,
And made fond vows to those for whom we care
Alas! that we once sung such songs as this, [not.
And gave the spirit to another's kiss!—

1.

Thou art mine!
As the first and only love
I have borne to womankind—
As the sunburst from above
On a spirit dark and blind;
I call thee with a kiss,
And I call thee with a tear,
In a lay so wild as this—
And I know that thou wilt hear.

2.

Thou art mine!
As the stars belong to heaven,
And the sunshine to the earth—
As the summer dew is given
To the flower in its birth:
As my own appointed bride,
In whose bosom is my home,
I call thee to my side—
And I know that thou wilt come!

XVII.

Alas! that all this confidence was altered
By some few changes, to the following!
Not that my rhyming-horse fell down or faltered,
Not that my eagle had a broken wing,
But that I found myself slightly Sir Waltered—
Chiselled, cut out, and all that sort of thing,
And sung another song, as nearer fit
My feelings, and the way that I was "bit."

XVIII.

There is more poetry, no doubt, in grief,
And so the second is of course the best:
Time soothes, but writing couplets is the chief
Corrector of all fulness in the breast—
Letting off steam is always a relief,
And takes off the fandagos from the chest;
And I shall never write such rhymes again
Till I get up another "real pain!"

1.

'Tis the last blessing I shall dare
To lay upon that beauteous head,
Save murmurings in the muttered prayer
That on the wild night-wind is shed;
I shall not dare again to speak
My thought of thee to mortal ear,
Save as the fitful moanings break
From the cold lips of palsied Fear!

2.

For thou art his!—They say 'tis crime
To think of thee as I have done,
When I have striven so long a time
To blend our feelings into one:
They say I must not look on thee
To drink the starlight of thine eyes,
And that my words no more must be
Borne with the tales of summer skies!

3.

They say thou hast no love for me—
No altar for the priceless gems
I have borne home from land and sea
To deck thy zones and diadems:
For thou art his!—and thou hast given
To him all hope, and love, and prayer;
Thou canst not spare one star from heaven
To him who may not enter there!

XIX.

Alas! that this should be the end of all
Our high-built fabrics—crumbling to dust!
And bearing down our spirits in their fall
To the long weakness of a broken trust.
But joy that we have manhood to recall
Our spirits back from solitude and rust,
And sing unto a second love another—
Holier, fonder, calmer than the other:—

1.

I've sat beneath the summer moon,
And thought it autumn light;
But—joy for my returning heart—
It looks like spring to-night!
I am once more what I have been,
Ere Grief bowed o'er her urn;
And dear as old friends hastening back,
Those starry lights return!

2.

I've sat beneath the summer moon,
And wept departed years—
And thought of eyes that ne'er again
Should sparkle through their tears!
I can not call again to me
The flowers that died last year:
But sweetly we have filled their place,
And we'll forget them here!

XX.

Joy, when we can recall so gloriously
Part of our vanished idols, and can sing
The same old songs, beneath another sky,
With other birds calling our second spring!
Our old enthusiasm's past, but joy
That we have mustered fortitude to bring
Back half the truant angels that are gone;
Alas! for those who never call back one!

XXI.

Pardon, me, reader! I did not intend
To bore you with old thoughts of mine and hers;
But you may know how, without our command,
Forgotten feeling wakes again and stirs—
How we take by the button our old friend
The Public, and pour out into his ears
All that we ever did, or ever missed,
After the fashion of an egotist.

XXII.

Love's summer is near autumn, like the year's,
And they should know it whose delicious eyes
Smile on their coming happiness through tears
That, wayward and unbidden, seem to rise

Without a reason.—Ella's gentle ears

Had heard no warning thunder in the skies,
And yet her heart had trembled in her breast
With some foreboding dim and unexpressed.

XXIII.

And as they sat together, the last eve
Of their communion, her sweet eyes were wet
With tears, that seemed reluctant yet to leave
The eyelids where like crystals they were set;
And round him Juan felt her white arms heave,
As if she struggled to retain him yet,
And feared to find him gliding from her arms—
The tenderest of a woman's fond alarms.

XXIV.

I deem that Juan's thought to her was pure—
Unstained by his voluptuousness, unstained
By the dark thoughts and wishes which allure
The fiery-moulded and the fever-brained;
With him the sensual must still endure,
But might by woman's tenderness be chained—
And was, no doubt, till that sweet girl had less
Of headlong passion, more of tenderness—

XXV.

Than he had ever borne to womankind
Before, or ever bore them afterward.
Were not our spirits commonly so blind,
And so disposed ever to disregard
The tokens which kind Heaven has assigned
To lead us to contentment and reward—
We might find, oftener, one upon whose breast
Even the Tempter might be lulled to rest!

XXVI.

I deem that in that hour the angel hovered
Above his head, and that had nothing turned
The bitter spirit backward, and uncovered
The fiery furnace where his passions burned,
The gay companion and the pleasant lover'd
Perhaps have left the lava still inurned
That never flows upon a second course,
But it sweeps on with devastating force!

XXVII.

Our sins are visited—on us?—Ay, more:
On those who had no share in them; the train
Of Juan's falsehood to Marie, bore
A bitterness to sear up heart and brain;
And though I hate to wade through woman's gore,
I speak the end, in agony and pain,
Just as the legend tells us—Ella's fate
Paid heavily for "good resolves too late."

XXVIII.

I have not planned the tale myself—I have
But gathered and continued an old tale—
Whose thread of story, changing like the wave,
Is sung and told in many a sunny vale,
In many a clime and language; I would crave,
If it were otherwise, that she should pale
Beneath neglect and coldness, when he sickened
With her love, and another one had beckoned!

XXIX.

But it was never thus, and I must write
As truth compels me; but I will not be
Too circumstantial in the tale of fright
That I have gleaned from Juan's history;
I will not linger on it, as I might,
But give one glance of hateful memory
To the first shadow of the bitter blood
That followed over France so like a flood.

XXX.

'Twas night, and Juan entered the dark street,
 And passing onward toward Ella's door,
 Saw in the lamplight a dark shadow flit
 Across the street, but half a square before,
 With motion as of one who feared to meet
 His eye, but as he still kept on, once more
 The figure glided backward, near the place
 Where he must pass, and met him, face to face.

XXXI.

One glance revealed a woman's face, the next
 Showed him Marie's, who, as he passed by—
 Half-sorrowful at meeting her, half-vexed
 To meet her there—gazed on him, with an eye
 That under the bright lamplight looked so fixed
 And cold and glassy, that he heaved a sigh,
 Half penitence, it might be, and half shame,
 And half of something else that had no name.

XXXII.

He turned, and she was gone—and he passed in
 The mansion, and a glow of mellow light
 Came through the inner doorway, that had been
 Apparently left open for his sight;
 And then he paused, thinking how warm, within,
 Would be sweet Ella's greeting him, that night,
 And entered, to behold a sight that chilled
 Even a heart like his, so proudly filled.

XXXIII.

Dead in her woman's beauty, by the side
 Of her lone harp she lay! her dress was snow,
 Her soft brown hair dressed as if she had tried
 That evening, to be all the lovelier so;
 But the fine hair was loose, and the red tide
 Was welling from her bosom calm and slow,
 And the soft hand was red, as if the wound
 Had gashed it e'er the softer heart it found.

XXXIV.

Dead in her woman's beauty; dead, yet warm
 And almost breathing—telling that the blow
 Whose touch had brought death to that angel form,
 Had stopped her pulse so little while ago.
 None knew save Juan, whence had burst the storm,
 None could explain for him, what time or how
 The blow could have been given—all e'er known
 Was—Ella's being left an hour alone.

XXXV.

None knew, save Juan, and he never told
 Even of one suspicion, so it passed
 To be a wonder; there was no rich gold
 Known in that silent house to be amassed,
 That could have tempted robbery, and cold
 Deliberate murder. Wild and very vast
 May be conjecture, but there are some times
 When it is faulted, even in our crimes.

XXXVI.

But Juan's heart needed no outward question
 To tell him who had done it; the one glance
 From that wronged woman's eyes, left one impres-
 sion
 That sought no other proof from after chance—
 Told him how fatal, such a fiery breast in,
 Was jealousy (the fiercer in such haunts)—
 Told him her blood was on Marie's hand,
 And that France was to him a banished land.

XXXVII.

I know not if in hearts like his there beat
 The agonies that torture those less firm;
 I know not if the treading of his feet
 In other lands, had not laid down the worm

Of conscience to a quiet—but the sweet
 And cold dead face, awoke the buried germ,
 And haunted him, as if his own misdeed
 Had given the young and beautiful to bleed.

XXXVIII.

Could he but have recalled, could we recall
 All, anything—we might be, and might not;
 Fate, time, and circumstance, have raised a wall,
 To fence us from a worse (?) or better (?) lot;
 But could he have struck out from memory, all
 That made his own share in this tragic plot,
 He might have sorrowed more, but writhed far less,
 For self-accusing is all bitterness.

XXXIX.

He knew that his own crime, in the reaction,
 Had guided the quick hand of jealousy—
 To still the beating heart, whose warm affection
 Might have made sunlight of his destiny—
 He knew that bitterly the recollection
 Should rest upon his bosom; it may be
 That he knew more, and thought of blood repaid
 Upon the hand that loosed the fatal blade.

XL.

"Tragedy," in the papers, and "regret,"
 Under the fashionable head, proclaimed
 That all France was at liberty to bet
 Whether the murderer would be ever named,
 And that Don Juan was no longer set
 Upon the pinnacle where he had beamed
 As the first star of fashion; he was seen
 Last by the Frenchmen, on the route for Spain.

XLI.

Few were his farewells, not a warm "good-bye"
 To one of his companions; no one knew
 Save Leila, whither he had gone, or why;
 And she but by a parting line, that flew
 By post to southern France, that with wet eye
 She silently and mournfully read through;
 In which she may be followed by as many
 As care to read his thoughts to her, if any.

XLII.

"My little Leila! little you must be,
 Although a woman and a mother now;
 In truth I can not bring myself to see
 What may be seen to-day upon your brow;
 I can not bring myself, quite readily,
 To think of anything like that long vow,
 For one who seems to me so very young,
 To have such ripened roses round her flung.

XLIII.

"My little Leila! I took up the pen
 To say farewell, but fell to thinking slowly
 That there must be a something kept from men,
 But given unto woman's nature wholly—
 That tells them of the boundary where and when
 They must leave off their merry melancholy,
 And grow domestic and all that, and mind
 The softer interests of womankind.

XLIV.

"Had I possessed this knowledge, I might be
 A different, and perhaps a wiser man;
 I know not but I look with different eye
 From that I used to, upon nature's plan;
 It may be that I think it vain to lie
 Always beneath my mantle, as I can,
 It may be, that if I could once retrace
 My steps—I might seek out a different place,

XLV.

"And be as you are, Leila! good; no matter
The time is past now, and the angel's gone;
A few months have done very much to batter
The temple of my trust, and led me on
Where passion always leads, if you will let her,
Soiling the laurels that she once has won;
My hand is loosened from the bridle-rein
That I shall likely never hold again.

XLVI.

"I never shall return to France, my foot
Is on the border of my native Spain;
Would that with leaving it, I could uproot
All that its scenes have planted in my brain,
For even now across my vision shoot
Wild images of agony and pain
That are not fitting for your gentle eyes,
And must be stifled, even as they rise.

XLVII.

"Look not for me in Spain: you will not find
One trace of me, or know me if you do;
I may be near you, and not leave behind
Aught to remind you of the one you knew;
I would that this, my farewell, might be kind,
And that it might appear as such to you;
I have one promise kept as all should be,
And that is, guarding you most faithfully.

XLVIII.

"There must be something in farewells; I've had
A dozen, but I never took before
My pen to write one, fondly, truly sad;
I mind that I received one that I wore
Next to my heart some time, but that was had
When I was younger, some eight years or more;
I read it leaving Spain, and write my own
On its frontiers, returning and alone."

XLIX.

His words were solemn, far too solemn for
Gay twenty-five or under; and my tale
Has grown, insensibly, to gliding more
Calmly and slowly onward through the vale
Of his last soft emotions—but life wore
More sternness, after he had passed the pale
Of his last love, and so my words must be
Splashed more with reckless wild philosophy,

L.

Which usually is mud; at least it soils
Garments, and blackens linen, and in short—
If driven through upon a canter, spoils
All things but our propensity to sport;
In short, it sticks to us, as various oils
Do to a very delicate silk skirt;
Philosophy and oil being at some pains
Never to leave, while anything remains.

LI.

Oh recklessness! oh wild philosophy!
Oh merry madness! I address ye all;
How villainously you have petted me,
And raised me up, only to let me fall;
How you have made me grow outrageously
In spirit, though in valor very small,
How you have stuck to me like wax, and will
Stick to me till my very heart is still.

LII.

I love ye, as my dearest enemies, [friends,
Who are, of course, much dearer than dear
And I shall sing mad ballads, and tell lies
Most probably, until my being ends,

For where my bump of reverence should rise
There are some little, very little bends,
In short, some slight deficiencies; 'tis wrong,
But even Fowler lets it pass along.

LIII.

And through what scrapes I've followed you, what
Repented afterward, I have let out; [oaths,
How I have found some bruises and torn clothes,
In various man-traps that were set about;
How I have done what sober reason loathes,
Because you said "'twas right without a doubt,"
How I have hurt warm feelings for your sake,
In hearts that worlds could tempt me not to break!

LIV.

How you have made me laugh at certain parodies
Of sacred things, when I should first have frowned,
And jump at wicked things for sake of rarities,
And made profane jests, only for the sound,
And made me write stuff, that in sober verity's
Rhyme without reason, and bad sense unbound;
How you have helped me fill the last four stanzas
With "vanity," as Solomon's old man says.

LV.

How you have bored the public, in my person,
With egotism that no man would dare,
Who had not sins enough to lay his verse on,
Or had for criticism one moment's care,
But critique or review can lay no worse on
My pages, than I am prepared to bear—
Nor worse than I can say about myself,
So, if you please, lay that pen on the shelf.

LVI.

I am as wild as ever, but less reckless,
Perhaps, in actions; you may well begin,
Maybe, by thinking folly a good necklace,
But hardly fit to clothe the body in;
I let out some two hundred oaths a-week, less,
Perhaps I have docked off some heavier sin,
But for my old philosophy and madness—
I love them better, as I have more sadness.

LVII.

And Juan, not forgotten, although dropped,
Must be dashed over rapidly, he was
In Cadiz or Madrid, he skipped or hopped
As one moves when a fatal power draws—
From northern Spain to southern, but he stopped
Not once in Seville, with or without cause;
His round of dissipation everywhere
Led him, but did not seem to lead him there.

LVIII.

It was as he had said—his hand was loosed
From off the bridle-rein of passion—wild
And fearful were the stolen arts he used
To win unto his bosom passion's child,
In every rank and station, and abused
Fearfully, was the beauty that yet smiled
Upon his brow, despite of passion's traces,
A lingering touch, yet, of the early graces.

LIX.

To trace his course minutely, would be long
And little fitting for my history,
It would be one long epitome of wrong
In every age, condensed most fearfully—
Passions that had been delicate, though strong,
Were delicate no longer; in the free
Admittance at the last, there had been some
That only with old age and sin may come.

LX.

But still there was that latent pride, forbidding
That noble blood should ever be disgraced ;
His name beneath another one was hidden,
As his intention had been once confessed :
And wildly as his steed of sin was ridden,
The arms upon his 'scutcheon were effaced—
And as he never came to Seville, none
Knew that they looked upon Don Jose's son.

LXI.

He heard of France : heard that its king had fallen
Upon the block raised by a maddened people,
And knew that he had shared the lot of all in
The dangerous elevation of a steeple—
So nice for any one to put a ball in
Who chooses to sow anarchy and reap ill ;
He knew that France's kingdom and his own
Were very much alike—both overthrown !

LXII.

Presto !—He was in Seville. I am going
At railroad speed, but so are all my pages.
They say that stars and dashes look so knowing,
That all the writers use them, at short stages ;
I have so many numbered stanzas owing,
To earn my stipulated scribbling-wages,
And must have so much room as there is yet,
To have my finish elegantly set !

LXIII.

"In Seville was he born, a pleasant city,"
Says Byron, and no wonder he went back :
His birth and his return were both a pity,
Say half my friends, but what of that ?

And if I drop him there, it will be kind
Not to have left him on the road behind.

LXIV.

A feeling such as animates all men
When coming home from foreign lands, possessed
To look as Juan had once looked, again [him :
And with more care than usual he had dressed
In the rich garb of Spanish gentlemen ; [him
When once again the orange-groves oppressed
With their old fragrance, and he stood before [him
What proved to be his own deserted door !

LXV.

Few knew of his return : but he inquired
Of what he knew before—his mother's death—
Found that her second husband had retired
With the etceteras—and that her last breath
Had been some good advice for him, inspired
By something very like a dying faith
In his not being "altogether quite"
What her confessor would consider right.

LXVI.

He took possession, as you might have done
In the same case, after he got the keys—
Which task, however, was no pleasant one,
And not accomplished with the greatest ease :
An old housekeeper had enjoyed the run
Of the house lately, when she seemed to please ;
From her, after discovering where she was,
He got some information, and much sauce.

LXVII.

He found a house in moderate repair,
Some dust, and plenty of good furniture—
Which last he wondered had been still left there
With such an old housekeeper, and so poor ;

He hunted up some decent dining ware,
And ate a lonely dinner, to be sure,
Which he resolved to mend with better kettles,
Some company, and rather more of victuals !

LXVIII.

There were, in truth, about the silent place
Some memories not altogether pleasant—
Some mirrors where he'd seen his boyish face
Look far less fallow than it did at present ;
And, looking where he ran his younger race,
The tokens of the past time were incessant—
Pictures, and books, and doors, and everything,
Whose unchanged looks shows out Time's darkened
wing !

LXIX.

An open house he judged the quickest thing
To start up popularity : men like,
It seems, to drink from almost any spring
But their own pockets ; I think I could strike
The presidential chair at half a fling,
If I could only "do the dinners thick !"
Men's stomachs are perhaps as tender as
Their consciences, and more : but let that pass.

LXX.

French cooks, they say, are quite omnipotent ;
I do not doubt it : French wines are, I know ;
I recollect a kind of mock lament
Written by somebody, some time ago,
Who had without a bit of use, been sent
To Oxford, and a parliament or so,
But dropped off wofully in popularity
Because his dinners lacked sufficient rarity !

LXXI.

Another, with ten miles of dining-room,
And sixteen cooks, had spoken sixteen words
In twenty years, and served up as they come
The cattle from about five hundred herds—
French dishes that I quite forget the sum,
And various unheard-of kinds of birds—
Had been elected by grand acclamation
A standing honor to his grateful nation !

LXXII.

All which goes very leisurely to prove
That palates are more powerful than brains,
And that the great majority best love
To have their ribs fattened with extra pains,
Shakspeare says that activity will move
The intellect no longer, when sense reigns ;
Which I believe, by noticing that dinner
Invariably makes my thoughts come thinner.

LXXIII.

And if I live till forty, I shall be
An old man of a most enormous girth,
Because I shall grow old most speedily,
And eat all the good things I find on earth.
To keep off thinness and misanthropy,
Which, after all, are very little worth
Except to make us write some fine detesting,
And look particularly interesting.

LXXIV.

However—all the noble blood in Seville
Was called to dinner on the seventh day
Of Juan's second residence ; the evil
That had so seared his brow, was washed away
By forced hilarity, and for the revel
His spirits had assumed a graceful play—
Such as had been his grand characteristic,
Before he grew so old in years, and mystic.

LXXV.

Juan was popular at once, his wit

His cookery, and more than all, his wine,
Were voted excellent, and many a hit
Gallant and gay, was heard flung down the line
Of guests beside his table; lamps were lit
Toward evening, and the nectar of the vine
Grew finer, and some tales were told, and some
Inquiries made, of revels yet to come.

LXXVI.

One told that, something like a week before,
The Donna Julia (second name not mentioned),
Had been installed as Lady Abbess over [ed,
The convent where at first she had been pension-
Described the close and careful dress she wore,
And how she had been very good-intentioned,
And mentioned as a model of pure piety
By all who liked conventual society.

LXXVII.

One told of runaways, and one of fights,
And one of great discoveries in the moon;
One, that the southern French had got their rights,
And probably the world would have them soon;
Some spoke of ghosts upon bright moonlight nights,
And some declared they'd best be let alone;
While last, but not the least, one tale was told,
That made the rest seem very stale and old.

LXXVIII.

And that was—(sotto voce)—yesterday
A new discovery had been made; the line
Of statues in the great old cemetery
Had one new pedestal put to them—fine
In execution, but no statue lay
Upon it, and they'd just begun the nine
Accustomed days of wondering who the deuce
Would have his statue honored by its use.

LXXIX.

It was well known in Seville, that no dust
Was ever buried there, except nobility,
And no man took his burial upon trust
And raised a statue to his own gentility;
And as a natural consequence, there must
Be some rich blood waiting for death to spill it; he
Who told the story, vowed that he had seen
Things quite as strange when he was seventeen:

LXXX.

Which date had fallen sixty years before. [merry,
It ranged toward midnight, and the guests were
And Juan's face flushed deeper as he swore
To things that sober men had judged contrary;
Twelve! and in striking, opened wide the door,
And entered one guest unexpected, very,
A man of looks that seemed to be unknown,
As greeting hand was offered him by none.

LXXXI.

His dress was rich, yet dark as midnight, slashed
In places, with red lining, a close boot
On either leg, revealed a spur that clashed
And clattered as he walked, but the whole suit

Seemed stained with travel, as if he had dashed
Through mud and mire, on horseback or on foot,
And from the cloak that fell behind him, looked
A sword-hilt, with the end extremely hooked.

LXXXII.

A face of fifty years, with one large scar
Over the temple, and the heavy beard
Cut close and carefully, as if for war—
Beneath his heavy wide-brimmed hat appeared;
Dressed very much as opera bandits are
Before they happen to be shot or speared;
He strode in with a step exceeding wide
Along the table, up to Juan's side,

LXXXIII.

And stooping low, whispered into his ear
A word or two that made him turn and grip
His sword-hilt, and then rising with an air
Of pride, half anger, and a haughty step,
And something sounding like a backward prayer
Breaking, half-muttered, from his closing lip—
He, Juan, with the stranger just before,
Strode down the hall, and out, and closed the door.

LXXXIV.

The guests drank on, the wine was good, and they
Were drunk enough for any men in reason;
They heard not what the stranger had to say,
And held it granted that some trifling *laison*
Had left Don Juan some slight bill to pay
In blood, or that his purse had needed easing,
And thinking little of their absent host,
They would have drunk a bumper to his ghost.

LXXXV.

But the wit lagged, and when two hours had gone,
And Juan came not back, some fifty stares
Were flung around; the seat he had sat on
Was looked at, with some other empty chairs,
The soberest asked, "Where disappeared the Don?"
The drunkest answered, "Taken unawares;"
Some peeped out at the key-hole, and one went
Outside, but knew not what the mystery meant.

LXXXVI.

To cut the story short, they waited morning,
And half next day, but saw no more of him;
And then one gave a slow mysterious warning—
That they had noticed how the lamps burnt dim
When the tall stranger entered; all doubts scorning,
One had smelt brimstone at the very time;
And taking all these plausible suggestions,
Where the Don went to, no one ever questions.

LXXXVII.

One thing is certain, that that very day
The cemetery was visited, and there
Upon the pedestal we spoke of—lay
A figure of the Don, as fresh and fair
As ever marble imitated clay,
Dressed as he sat that night upon his chair;
The evil spirit, when the heart is sold,
May just as well step forward and take hold.



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